

A
HISTORY
OF THE
HICKSITE
QUAKERS
AND THEIR
DOCTRINES

BY
JAMES M. DeGARMO
A.M., PH.D.

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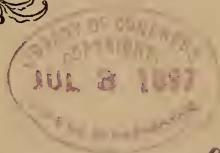


James M. DeGarmo.

THE HICKSITE QUAVERS
AND THEIR DOCTRINES

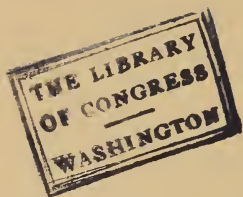


By JAMES M. DeGARMO, A.M., PH.D.



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To
THE MEMORY OF
MY NOBLE QUAKER FATHER
AND
MY SAINTED QUAKER MOTHER
WHOSE PURE AND HOLY LIVES HAVE BEEN A
PERPETUAL BENEDICTION TO
THEIR CHILDREN
This Little Volume is Dedicated
BY THEIR GRATEFUL SON





PREFACE.

This Book is not intended to be in any sense a *history* of the Hicksite Quakers. It originated in a Paper read by the author before Vassar Brothers' Institute in Poughkeepsie, some years ago, in reply to public utterances of a Clergyman against the Quakers, and the form of that address has been partly preserved, though it has been entirely rewritten and annotated. Its preparation has been rest and recreation for me in my busy life. It has proved a delightful task to pass in critical review the faith and practices with which I was familiar in my Boyhood and Youth ; and not only has it revived precious memories with which the past is peopled, but I am not unconscious that the prolonged studies and careful com-

parisons into which this work has led me have resulted, for myself, in more definite and more comprehensive views of religious truth in general, and especially of those primary and fundamental truths of Christianity, the Immanence of God in the Soul of Man, Man's immediate spiritual communion with Him, and His revelation of Himself in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. I am not disinclined to believe that upon these fundamental doctrines, with truly catholic liberty of interpretation, all Protestant Christians may yet join in a common worship, and the scattered fragments of the Church be re-united into the aggressive army of Truth and Progress.

This Essay has been severely criticised for the use of the term "Quakers" instead of "Friends," the name they themselves prefer. It is urged that this is not their chosen designation, but that they were called "Quakers" in reproach. This is no doubt true, but what was intended as a reproach, has become an honor ; what was

fixed upon them as a stigma, has become a crown of glory. The world knows what we mean by "Quakers"; the expression has passed into history, and for me and many another of their descendants it has associations that cannot easily be sacrificed. So I accept the censure, and retain the name as it was written.

It will easily be noticed that I have used the past and present tenses almost interchangeably. It was inevitable that this should be so. My intimate associations with the Quakers as a Society were in the past, in youth's Golden Days, but my admiration for their character, and my love for their blessed spirituality are living facts of the present. So I let the confusion of tenses stand, conscious that if it is not the best in a literary sense, it is at least the true reflection of my own mind, and of the moods in which the work has been done.

In addition to my own experiences among the Quakers, and to the authoritative Discipline of the Society, I am much

indebted to two little Books for succinct resumés of Hicksite Quaker Doctrine. The one is "Essays on the views of Friends," by John J. Cornell, "Approved by the Representative Committee of the Genesee Yearly Meeting," and published by the "Friends Publishing Association of Philadelphia." The other is "Sermons by Sunderland P. Gardner," delivered in Philadelphia in 1885. They are both valuable works, and are referred to in the notes as "Essays" and "Sermons," without further qualifications.

To the Rev. A. F. Olmsted, D.D., late Rector of the Church of the Messiah in Rhinebeck, I am under lasting obligations, not only for criticisms and suggestions, but for generous sympathy and encouragement in my effort to make a clear statement of Quaker opinions. With the foundation of all Quakerism, the belief in man's consciousness of God's immediate self-revelation to the human soul, he was in perfect accord, however he might dissent from other points of their doctrine.

To my Students, ex-Students and Friends, whose generosity has made it possible for me to publish this book, I can only return sincerest thanks. The delicacy of the compliment thus paid me is appreciated, and adds one more to the many pleasant incidents of my life as a teacher.

Finally, if this little work shall be instrumental in spreading a better knowledge of the Faith and Character of the Church of my Childhood, or in showing to some minds among the Quakers their practical unity with the more active and prosperous Body of the Church of Christ, I shall feel all my labors repaid a hundred-fold.





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THE HICKSITE QUAKERS.

CHAPTER I.

The Hicksite Quakers. Their Decadence.

The Quaker Society, or Religious Society of Friends, had its origin in England. While in that country it remained united and aggressive, on being transplanted to America, under conditions of greater freedom, differences of opinion sprang up on fundamental points, as the nature of Christ, the Character of the Atonement, the Authority of the Bible, the Salvation by Christ, the necessity of a formal creed, and yet others of minor importance. The one side or party adopted the usual orthodox or evangelical views held by almost all of our Protestant Churches. The other side

adopted what may be called, for the sake of distinction, more liberal views, as the Divinity but not the Deity of Christ, the Inspiration but not the Infallibility of the Bible, and they differed widely also in their interpretation of Salvation by Christ. These differences failed of reconciliation, as both parties claimed to find support for their views in the writings and opinions of earlier Friends, especially of George Fox, Robert Barclay, Thomas Ellwood, William Penn and others. Having no central authority to decide such issues, the divergence of views increased, till in 1827 a complete schism or separation took place, resulting in the establishment of two organizations, each claiming to be the legitimate body or Religious Society of Friends. The one adhering to evangelical standards was known as the "Orthodox Society of Friends." A prominent part on the liberal side was taken by a very able, eloquent and active preacher, Elias Hicks, who, whether right or wrong in his opinions, was evidently a man

of great power and influence. From his prominence in the Society the second party became known as the "Hicksite Society of Friends," though nothing was further from the mind of Elias Hicks than the idea of affixing his name to the body of religious views he advocated, and many of the Society still repudiate the title. But history and use fix such marks of distinction often against the most vehement protests, and so this branch of the divided Society is known as Hicksite Quakers. Springing as it did out of a bitter controversy, and assailed as heretical and unsound by its sister Society, it is perhaps not strange that few people have ever been more persistently misunderstood and misrepresented than the Society of Hicksite Quakers. Having no formulated Creed to be subscribed to as an indispensable condition of acceptance in the Fraternity, no set of test questions by which to try such as would become acknowledged Ministers of the Word, and exercising so large a toleration towards all varieties of

opinion, if held and announced with any moderation at all, and shrinking from anything like discussion, they have been discredited in many quarters as a religious organization of very doubtful tendencies, and often openly assailed as perverters of Christianity. In the days of Puritanism, when an error of thought was held to be as fatal as a sin actually committed, no other estimate of them was to be expected. But now, when the leaven of Christian Charity and Forbearance is so manifestly at work in every Denomination, when a larger toleration is everywhere demanded,—when every Church includes such a variety of opinions within its fold,—and especially when the first notes are being sounded of that call for unity among Protestants which is yet to issue in some common worship, it would seem that the times are ripe for a more judicial consideration of the true position of these Quakers. Moreover, to many the Society is a thing of the past. Not many years ago, they were a strong organization, both

in numbers and influence, in many parts of the country. Their "First Day" gatherings were large, and able men and women took up their Ministry, and bore faithful testimony everywhere. Not only among their own people, but often among those of no Church affiliation whatever, these Ministers were welcomed and gladly heard. Their zeal often overleaped the limits of their local work, and led them to bear the Banner of the Preached Word to distant parts, in great humility of Spirit, yet, too, in strains of exulting triumph over sin and death. Taking no pay for their services, but freely giving of the grace they had received, they remind one, not infrequently, of the Apostles of old, preaching Christ as the panacea of all mortal ills. Their plain, economic habits accorded well with the earlier condition of our busy people, and their simple service asked but little outlay on the externals, but slight expense for the *garments* of religion. Their demands upon the intellect were not large, for they in-

dulged in no subtle abstractions, no elaborate metaphysics of doctrine, and there was no active ill-will borne them, as they made no efforts to win proselytes from other folds.

But a change has been slowly going on, and to the careful observer it is now plain that their Society has passed the period of its greatest activity, and has entered upon a period of decline. Where *once* it was strong, it may now have no organization at all. Many of its Meeting Houses are abandoned, or opened only at funerals, and others have been pulled down or converted to other purposes. In Dutchess County alone several of its meetings have been given up, one or two others lead a merely nominal existence, and no one of the active meetings has a preacher of old-time readiness and eloquence. In some instances, perhaps in most, the decline in numbers and interest is certainly caused by the absence of any regular preaching. Friends themselves claim that the dearth of preachers is due

to unfaithfulness in heeding the monitions of the Inward Light. The spirit that animated them once is failing among their descendants.

In some parts of the United States I am told that the Society is on the increase, is adapting itself to the changing circumstances of the times, discarding its stereotyped forms, and is imbued with new life. But I think a careful census of its active membership will show here, as it does in England, a steady decrease, that points to ultimate extinction. Every sign is in that direction. The Quaker dress, once so common, has almost disappeared from our streets, and the zeal of its Preachers drives them less frequently out upon long and tedious journeys to bear their faith to weary, fainting hearts. So, too, its sweet and simple speech, which always seemed to me so divine, and yet so lovingly and intensely human, is giving place to the common phrase of the world, and with it is fading out one of the most fascinating of

the *visible* characteristics of old-fashioned Quakerism. But above all other indications of decay, is the startling fact that the Young People, the descendants of Quakers, though born into all the rights and privileges of membership, are silently and often regretfully withdrawing from the fold, and finding their spiritual homes in other denominations. Some, too, have severed all connection with the visible Church, and are drifting, without helm or purpose, on the shoreless seas of Agnosticism and denial.

Thus we briefly indicate the apparent signs of dissolution,—not from violence *without*,—for it has suffered none in our day,—but from disintegration *within*,—by that natural process of decay inevitable to every organization whose work is done.

It is natural and necessary that in its decline it should be made the subject of criticisms and questionings. On the one hand, men who have never known it in its palmy days, would honestly ask about its creed. “What do the Quakers believe?” is not

an uncommon question where there is no longer a Quaker to answer. Or again, "Are the Quakers really a Christian Society?"—and still further I have been asked in all sincerity, "Are they not a body of Infidels and Atheists?" To such seekers after knowledge there should be plain answers given. But on the other hand, there are *explicit charges* made against them as false and malicious as can be concocted by bigotry, ignorance and self-conceit. For example,—not long since, at the funeral of a venerable and respected Quaker a clergyman of another denomination asserted that "This man had lived without God and without religion in the world," and intimated that this was true of Quakers as a class. It is such statements as this, whether originating in ignorance or malice, which demand some answer. If the Quakers merely refuse, as this man did, the ministrations of a clergyman in the hour of death, it may only mean that they have no confidence in the holy office he claims to

exercise. But if they *do* live "Without God and without religion" all their lives, then their pretence of being a religious body for the worship of God is a bit of masquerading which should be promptly uncovered. If they do *not* so live, these falsehoods about them should be exposed, even though men in clerical garb become their self-constituted Judges.

Let no one suppose for a moment that I am an impartial and unbiassed advocate. I should be ashamed to be so. I *love* the Quakers, and I have known the serene consecration of their faith, and the beauty of their lives, and the deep sincerity of their worship. Born into the arms of a Blessed Quaker Mother,—drinking Quakerism in the very milk that nursed me,—learning it from my Father's lips, and breathing it in all the air of my Childhood and Youth, I have known it intimately, and I owe it too deep a debt of love and gratitude to be indifferent in its defense. However much I may lament its weaknesses, mine shall not be the hand to deal it *one unkind* blow.

Mine, rather the high privilege, from the bosom of another church, to speak in its defense, and to utter its truthful praises in this hour of its waning prestige.

True enough, my maturer manhood has found rest and a home in the Protestant Episcopal Church,—*not* because I found Quakerism *all false*, but because I found *all its* truths in the Church, and my soul's larger liberty in her more comprehensive inheritance of tradition, of ritual, of prayer and of sacred song, and her more pliant and expansive organization to meet the wants of a world that never pauses in its career of progress. But loyalty to the truth should be the motto of Episcopalian, Quaker or Presbyterian alike, and for that truth's sake I would write.

But let it be distinctly understood that I speak of the Hicksite Quakers as an Organization, and not of any who have discarded the fundamentals of all religion, and yet claim the name of Quakers. Such must speak for themselves, they have no advocate in me.



CHAPTER II.

Their General Character.

It is as well, perhaps, that we should inquire as to what has been *the character* of this suspected people, how they have borne themselves in the struggle for existence? Whether their lives have shown that dissolute tendency springing from a disregard of all religious obligations? If they can stand the Scriptural test, "By their fruits ye shall know them," or as the Apostle has put it, "I will show you my faith by my works," then they may not be so dangerous after all! Have their works been good or ill? Certainly, in their relations with the world they have been an almost ideal people. Simple, gentle, sincere and kind-hearted, is the all but unanimous verdict. Have they not been uniformly good friends,

obliging neighbors, and valuable citizens ? To whom have the distressed and sorrowing gone more freely for sympathy and comfort, than to these " Broad-Brims and Strait Coats " ? Who among all the denominations of Protestants has been more kindly tolerant of every man's opinion, more profoundly convinced of the Brotherhood of all men ? In business, the member who does not pay, or honestly *strive to pay*, his just debts, is an exception, a Subject to be labored with by his Brethren and to be visited with the penalties of the Discipline if he is obstinate in his non-compliance. The whole section of the Discipline on " Trade " is admirable, and breathes the very spirit of honor and of rectitude in dealing with failures and misfortunes among members. It shows, moreover, how extensively the society could and did interfere with the affairs of a brother in financial distress. This interference could take on the form of wise counsel, of kind admonition and warning, or finally, if an objectionable

course was continued, of disowning from membership in the society. The Discipline likewise forbids the habitual use of intoxicants, as a beverage, the frequenting of taverns and all places of gaming or of trivial and questionable amusements. So too the Quakers have thrown the strongest safeguards around the marriage relation, and I have never yet known of an application for divorce from their members. It is worth noticing that the Puritans of New England shamefully persecuted the Quakers for their "dangerous heresies" of opinion, fining, imprisoning, robbing and whipping them pitilessly. But these same dangerous heretics have preserved the most sacred of all the relations of life, the marriage relation, with unswerving fidelity and christian spirit, while it is the acknowledged disgrace of the descendants of the Puritans that divorce is attainable among them not only for very insufficient reasons, but even without any reason at all, except the caprice of parties concerned. Dr. Leonard Bacon

is authority for the most telling arraignment of his own New England on this question. The fruits of Puritanism compare badly in this respect with the course of the Quakers, so much distrusted for their opinions.

Another characteristic of this people is the consideration shown to poorer members,—not such only as are objects of charity, but those also who, from comparative poverty, would naturally have little influence in any organization. Their Society is a commonwealth without titles and without distinctions among the Brethren. They have no desirable pews for sale which the rich can buy over the poor, for their sittings are absolutely free. The privilege of the front or “facing” seats, though nowhere recognized by written law in the society, is generally conceded to the older and more active members, who have seen long service in the interests of the meeting. But there, too, the richest and the poorest sit side by side without any mark of rank,

and many a time have I seen an old man sitting at the "Head of the meeting" who earned his bread by daily labor of a severe kind, while next to him sat one worth his thousands yearly. In their intercourse with one another special care was taken to make such members feel that they stood upon a perfect equality with all the rest, and that they held a goodly place in the affections of their more favored Brethren. Well do I remember that I once overheard two Friends exhorting each other to greater diligence in cheerful, comforting conversation with a timid, hesitating Brother, who evidently feared that his poverty might not commend him to their good graces. At another time I heard an exhortation *to visit* such a member, and take a meal with him, to remove any undue humiliation he might feel from his poverty. These are little things, but they tend to show *the kind of equality* existing among the Quakers. We are accustomed to say that there is no high, no low, no rich, no poor in Christ, and the

Spirit of our Blessed Master would make it so, but it still remains *a fact* that the richest men *can* and *do* hire the best pews in most Churches, and so we are seated to worship according to our wealth and influence. I am not censuring the Church for this apparently unavoidable difficulty, I only say that *the Quakers do not do it that way*. *Their* Society is a religious republic, where men are on a common footing and can worship and give of their penury or their plenty as may be, and not be reminded of it by the location of their pew.

A very attractive feature of the organization is its "Birthright Membership." Every child whose parents are Friends at the time of its birth, is by inheritance a child of the society, and at a suitable age is enrolled as an active member. If one parent only is a member, the child, with the consent of both parents, becomes a birthright member. Neither rite nor sign is needed to confirm its membership, but it assumes its place in the Church as naturally and as necessarily

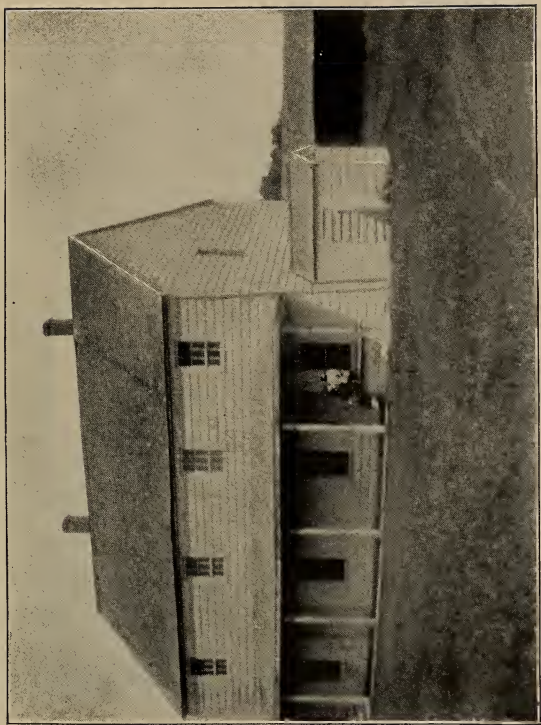
as in the paternal home. From the earliest years of understanding, with its earliest thoughts, the child is made to feel itself in the fold of the Church of Christ, and to regard this as a sacred inheritance. It creates an atmosphere of fixedness, of certainty, and throws around the growing youth the most restraining and beneficial influences. Some other Churches seek the same result by means of infant baptism. Moreover, these Quakers have been, with all their plain ways, a sunny-faced, cheery people. It has seemed to be a kind of unwritten law among them to maintain a cheerful countenance. "I remember their pleasant ways, and how glad I was to visit them when a boy, for it always made me happier," said an elderly man to me a short time since. They had what Matthew Arnold calls "Sweetness and light" in their composition, and their faith disposes them that way. They dwell less than many others on the awful fact of retribution even in this world. Yet the bitterness and desolation

of spirit in which they often find themselves through some unfaithfulness to the Inner Light must be of itself a terrible retribution. They may be at times reduced almost to despair by the withdrawal of the marks of Divine favor within them. John Woolman, Elias Hicks, and every strong writer among them, record these periods of suffering. But after all they prefer to dwell on the gentler and holier attributes of God,—his love, his mercy, his forgiving grace, his readiness to stir the depths of their souls, and this disposes their hearts to cheerfulness, rather than gloom. They are not vaguely grasping at a far off Heaven, and

“The golden pomegranates of Eden
To quiet their fever and pain,”

but are in the enjoyment of immediate acceptance with their Heavenly Father. They are thus eminently fitted to soothe and comfort the sorrowing, and for works of charity and deeds of mercy. Their gentle ways were in themselves a benediction. Their sys-

tem of caring for their own poor is a marvel of delicacy and tact, and is followed as a sacred duty. No honest Quaker in good standing need ever apply to the town for assistance, so scrupulously do they care for the needy among the Brethren. Again and again have I known the indigent and afflicted to be assisted by comforting words and still more comforting provisions with the most exquisite consideration for the feelings of the sufferer, the strictest privacy being observed lest his self-respect be wounded before the world. Nor do they limit their ministrations to their own denomination, but relieve suffering everywhere, if their means allow. One characteristic of their charity has left an indelible impression on *my* mind,—the firmness with which they insist on the able-bodied being self-sustaining. Their aid has always been studiously withheld if the needy one has the health and strength to earn his own living. They will give him an opportunity for work, but make no parley with indolence. It is



FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE,
CRUM ELBOW, N. Y.

good Quaker doctrine that man shall earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and so the constitutional drones shun the Quakers. Look over their people to-day, and show a more uniformly well-conditioned class if you can. Not miserly and stingy, but economical and thrifty ; good liver and plain dressers. Their plainness in dress is not entirely a matter of economy, but a protest against estimating man by the apparel in which he may be attired.

So too the Quakers are a peaceful, law-abiding class, avoiding all unseemly wrangling and disputation, and are bound by their Discipline to settle their differences without litigation. The principle and practice of arbitration as advocated and applied by Friends so many years ago, are identical with the methods now rapidly gaining ground for settling the differences of capital and labor, and the disputes of nations. They were the forerunners in this application of mutual forbearance, voluntary compromise and Christian love to the serious

difficulties between men, and were far in advance of their time. It seems to have prevailed among them more from the spirit of love and justice than from any special theorizing on the matter. Through the honest attention they gave to the spirit of their religion they reached conclusions which are still struggling for recognition even in the churches of our land. And as they settled their own personal differences by arbitration, so they pleaded with nations to arrange all international questions without bloodshed. They have always borne a strong testimony against war as unchristian, inhuman and debasing, advocating peace in the name of the Great Prince of Peace. "Their ways are ways of pleasantness, and all their paths are peace." Sometimes this opposition to war on principle led them into anomalous situations, as notably in the war with the South. They agitated for the abolition of slavery, yet were opposed to the conflict which achieved that abolition. They always favored peaceful

emancipation, and could not be held responsible for the evils done in retaliation for their advocacy of high principle. Yet the tide of patriotism swept many of the younger ones from their moorings of non-resistance, and they fought like heroes and died like martyrs for their country's life.* There is probably no feature of their principles that has been so sorely tried as this principle of peace, and it has sometimes put them into queer dilemmas. I once visited my Father of Blessed Memory, a staunch peace man, during the days of Grant's pitiless fighting in the Wilderness, when blood seemed in the very air. Naturally enough, the conversation turned upon the war, and on Grant's obstinate grip,—when Father, usually so self-possessed, rose nervously

* In the circle of my own acquaintance, John and Edward Ketchum and Nehemiah Mann enlisted, and died in the defence of liberty. They were the sons of Quaker Parents, whose patriotic devotion overcame their scruples against war, and they sleep in Soldiers' graves.

from his chair, stepped rapidly to and fro across the room, and excitedly exclaimed : “ Well, I hope Grant will whip the life out of the rebels ! ” It seemed to restore the balance, like a safety-valve, for he immediately resumed his seat, only adding by way of apology,—“ It is all wrong though, this fighting, my Boy ! ” “ The Old Adam ” had overcome his Quaker conviction and self-control for the moment, and his Boy took sides with Adam that time.

This calm, serene self-control was another striking feature of the Quaker Character. Charles Lamb in his “ Imperfect Sympathies ” speaks of “ The admirable presence of mind which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies,” and of “ The astonishing composure of this people.” This did not spring from heartlessness nor stoicism, but it was rather the spiritual conquest of passion, its subjugation to the steadier and holier impulses of the soul. In truth, the main tendency of Quakerism was the subjection of all passion

to the dominion of the commanding voice of God within them, and the serenity of character, the composure and self-possession under trying circumstances, was its legitimate result.

No men have been more tenderly solicitous for the oppressed than these Quakers. All through the long dark period when the conscience of the nation seemed stupefied, these people demanded the liberty of the slaves, and the cry of these heralds of freedom was sounding through the land against the sin of human Slavery. When hundreds who did not hesitate to hurl the "Odium Theologicum" at them, were hunting slaves at the bidding of the South, these quiet Quakers were aiding the negroes in their flight towards freedom, and their homes were safe stations for the famous "Underground Railroad" of abolition days.

They, too, were among the first to recognize the claims of Woman to a perfect equality in the affairs of life. That exquisite sense of justice which their introspec-

tive and self-regulating habits cultivated revealed to them the truth that right was not the property or privilege of *sex*, any more than freedom inhered in color. They gave to their women a voice in the management of the meetings and struck from their marriage ceremony all unequal promises of service and obedience. The Quaker women were an active factor in reality, though a separate "Meeting for business" was created for them, instead of instituting one common business meeting for both men and women. But this Women's Meeting was and still is by no means an idle figure. It has frequently asserted itself vigorously, and under able leadership has antagonized the Men's Meeting and refused to agree with its decisions. The two bodies of co-ordinate rank and powers were a close approach to absolute equality long before other branches of the church had made any move in that direction. But in the meetings for worship women were allowed a place of perfect equality in the ministry of

the word and in prayer. Some of the ablest ministers of the society have been women. In their educational schemes too, their Boys and Girls were put upon an equal footing of substantial work in School. All the frippery fashionably attached to the education of women was rigorously discarded, and real mental nutriment was offered her instead. Long before Vassar, or Smith, of Wellesley were inchoate schemes in the minds of their founders, these modest Quakers were giving their Daughters as good training as they gave their Sons. They thus recognized that mental equality of the Sexes which has been a distinctive feature of their Society, and towards which the rest of the world has been slowly struggling, through much hesitation of mind and tribulation of spirit. The result was a surprising development of mental qualities among Quakeresses. Many of the finest platform speakers among women have sprung from their Society. Their mental discipline, with the mysticism and repose of

their worship, has produced some of the best specimens of womanhood the world has ever seen. The whole Quaker habit is peculiarly adapted to the highest development of woman's nature. Their Quietism suits her, giving her the dignity of repose, and specially fits her for all the most sacred duties of life, duties which she takes up as under the very eye of God. What wives and mothers they have made! What homes they have gathered round them! What a blessed and benign influence they have shed wherever they went! There have been women among them on whose countenances the peace of Heaven seemed resting. Lamb notices in his "Quaker Meeting" the benign countenances of some of the members. "I have seen," he says, "faces in their assemblies upon which the dove sat visibly brooding." Mrs. H. B. Stowe mentions this fact also, and others have spoken of it in a similar manner. It must have been a striking characteristic to attract so much attention. One woman among them attained

a national celebrity, a woman whose life was exposed to the public gaze, yet who carried her womanly gentleness like a shield about her into the thickest of the fray,—Lucretia Mott of Philadelphia. She was woman, prophet and saint in one; noble, gifted and motherly, one of the few the world will not forget. There has been many another noble woman among them whose presence was a benediction. The Quaker type of womanhood is a peculiar one, resembling in some features the type of the “Religious” among the Catholics, but differing from that in not renouncing the world, but in adapting itself to all the varied and trying duties of wife and mother, and sharing the temptations of the busy life of humanity, yet always gentle, strong, incorruptible, serene, intelligent and self-poised, while overflowing with all that is most womanly and affectionate.

But among the men the effort for self-repression was a sterner one, and the issue of the conflict often more doubtful,—for

they came into more varied contact with the world, and its bitter struggle roused more of the lion or of the hypocrite in them. Yet there, too, the Quaker spirit conquered oftener than it *was conquered*. My own Father was naturally an imperious, quick-tempered man, yet no one ever heard him in angry altercation with another, or heard loud, boisterous words from his lips,—but I have seen strong men shrink before his quiet, withering speech when he was angry, as though they feared a bullet might pierce their hearts. He was Quaker through and through.

This picture of the Quaker character is not an overdrawn one,—I believe it is faithful to the life. And surely the traits depicted here are just such as constitute the fruits of the highest Christian Faith. Would we not naturally expect the people who display *such* a character, to be devout, reverent, God-fearing and God-loving Souls? Are not such spirits, by whatever name they may be called, the very flower and fruit of a holy

Christianity ? I do not believe anyone is prepared to concede that such divine results spring from Pantheism, Infidelity or Atheism. And if not, then we will be prepared to inquire more minutely into the Faith on which such a character is founded, and from which it draws its perennial inspiration.





CHAPTER III.

Their Belief in God and in His Worship.

The foundation of all Quakerism is a belief in the existence of a personal, spiritual God and in His worship. Whatever else the Quaker is or is not, he *is* at the farthest remove from Agnosticism,—he *believes*, profoundly, reverently, in the One Eternal God, the Creator, and Sustainer of all things, and he *knows* of God's presence in his own Soul. His faith does not make Him a far off, solitary God, seated in some Celestial City, watching from a distance the machinery of the Universe He has set in motion, but an Immanent Spirit, "Who is over all, and through all, and in all." And by this they do not mean that He is merely present in the All of things, but that He is potentially, really and actively present in every individ-

ual soul. They further believe that He gives the humble and obedient heart manifest signs and tokens of his presence,—that they hear the very voice of God, speaking inwardly, spiritually, and with authority to their minds and consciences. And not to them only, but to every human heart, come these Divine messages, if that heart will but hear them. And they believe, too, that men may prepare their spirits by humble waiting in silence upon God for the reception of such messages. In that silent introspection, they make unconditional surrender of their own wills and passions, and are made tenderly susceptible of Divine impressions and inspirations. The more frequently the Spirit of man enters into this holy communion with God, the keener become its susceptibilities, the easier the road to that sublimest act of the soul. Some of the expressions used in reference to this are especially peculiar and suggestive. They say that their “ hearts are made tender before the Lord,” that he “ opened many things ” to them in

answer to their supplicating silence. This condition must, however, be observed,—there must be an absolute surrender of self and all its claims,—and “Thy Will, not mine, O Lord” must be the spiritual language of the heart. Such worship cannot be noisy and demonstrative. There must be nothing to turn the attention from the face of the Divine,—nothing to blunt its sensitiveness to the faintest touch of inspiration. Everything that can detract from perfect quiescence of mind and spirit must be removed. So ornaments of architecture, the beauties of color, and the melodies of sound, have no place in their services. And they are not omitted from accident or parsimony, but upon principle. The eye of sense must be closed to the exterior world, that the Divine illumination may be vouchsafed within. So they build no stately temples of worship, rear no holy altars, and chant no vespers. In plain, even barren rooms they gather, without sound of bell or summons of herald. One by one they drop into their

seats, without removing their hats, and the "service" begins in profound silence. *But in that silence they are worshipping*,—waiting in lowliest reverence and spiritual humility upon the Lord. They are not noisily telling him of their wants and wishes, but with souls uncovered towards Him, they wait for *His* Spiritual Power to manifest itself to their Spirits, convicting them of sin, humbling them before his perfect Holiness, quickening them to the perception of Divine Truth, and refreshing them with the consciousness of their unity with Infinite Love and Purity. To the uninitiated it seems quaint enough, that deep silence,—no psalm, no hymn, no invocation ;—at most an exposition of Truth or an exhortation from some worshipper who believes himself or herself to be moved to bear a "Testimony" or breathe a prayer before the waiting congregation,—then the silence renewed,—the hand-shaking that breaks up the common service,—some might feel like laughing at it all, but they would not, had

they lived within the circle of its chastening influence, and *known* the deep and awful sincerity of the Faith of these people in the Living God. Sometimes *the whole hour of service* would be spent in this waiting silence, and no word be uttered. No one feels moved to speak, and it would be scarcely less than blasphemy to speak without such moving in the heart. But such "Silent Meetings" as they themselves call them are by no means counted as lost occasions. For the truest and staunchest Friends they are often seasons of the richest spiritual fruitage ;—of great "Ingatherings" and "Refreshings." Often have they expressed their thankfulness for blessings dropped upon them in their "Silent Meetings," for the sweet communings they had experienced, and the inward grace and strength they had felt vouchsafed unto them there. They had felt their hearts covered with His overshadowing presence and brought into perfect submission to his will. And *that* is the Quaker ideal of Worship. To none is

the Eternal more vividly present than to him, and in this belief in the Spiritual God, actively present to his soul, is the key to the whole form of Worship, to the *very life* of Quakerism. They apply various terms to this Presence in their consciousness, calling it, "The Inner Light," *—"The Divine Word,"—"The Indwelling Logos,"—"The Witness of Truth,"—"The Testimony of the Spirit,"—but the meaning in all these expressions is the same,—it is the ever-present God, appealing to Man's Spirit, to his Love, to his Conscience, to all that is highest in his being. That is the one tremen-

* An admirable statement of the idea of the Inward Light is made in "The Quaker Invasion of Massachusetts," by R. P. Hallowell, in these words: "God is an indwelling spirit and humanity is His holy temple. His law is written upon the hearts of all men, and obedience to it will lead them into all truth, so far as religious truth is revealed to men. Through the operation of this law the soul of man is accessible to his Creator. It is the rule of life to which every one must subject himself, and out of which duty is evolved."
—Page 118.

dous fact which they never doubt, and which overshadows and belittles all other facts in comparison. That Presence is not confined to the Meeting House nor to its peculiar service. They believe they can commune with it in their daily toil, in their moments of solitude, and at times even in crowded thoroughfares. They believe this is a matter beyond all definition or demonstration ; one of experience with every individual soul,—an ultimate fact incapable of resolution, and beyond the province of logic, except as a premise to start from. Hence we find among them no elaborate demonstrations of the Being of God, and no attempt at a logical theory of Ontology or Theology. They prefer to assume as primary and fundamental this truth, which they claim is directly certified to the human consciousness, and requires no proof. It is not an argument to convince, but a summons to listen to the voice within, and know for yourself that God is. It is an appeal to Consciousness, before all else.

To many this appeal may seem revolutionary ; but if Protestantism is to stand at all, this will be the key to its position. Deny the validity of the appeal to Consciousness, and Authority alone remains, and the Roman Catholic Church has the only consistent, logical theory of Infallible authority. But once concede that the deliverances of Consciousness are valid as tests of truth,—that *through* it and *by* it God *does* speak to man's soul, inspiring, strengthening and guiding it, and an Authority is established which must supersede all others, for it is the very "Voice of God." For the soul to which it comes, it must be the final and supreme law, for its impressions and impulses are fresh and vital from the depths of everlasting purity and holiness. This is Quaker Doctrine,—that Man's Consciousness or Spiritual Nature is the avenue down which come the mysterious inspirations of the Divine,—the organ whose keys are swept by the fingers of God,—whose true music is the melody of heaven,—and whose Author-

ity is superior to Bishops or Cardinals, to Church or Bible. The Church, the Sacred Scriptures, the utterance of prophet, poet or saint, may be and are helps to the soul struggling upwards toward the light, but the one Living Voice is audible within you, and you must hear its accents to certify you of your peace. Its solicitations to righteousness are to be heeded, and its strength will become your strength in your weakness, and its leadings will guide you over mountain and through valley, over the bogs and moors and fens of life, and never beguile your trust to its ruin. Hour by hour it is pleading with us all, in tones thrilling with infinite tenderness, if we will only bring our wills into a condition of obedience to its admonitions. "Drink from this Living Fountain" is the Quaker call, for it alone giveth life; and this is the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world,"

"This light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream,"

and which, though we heed it not,

“Is yet the fountain light of all our day,
Is yet the master light of all our seeing,
. . . and has power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence.”

This belief is not a *new* one, the Quakers never claim it as such. It has been so from the creation ;—they refer all great religious movements and experiences to the action of the Immanent God, and so bind into one beautiful brotherhood the religious life of all times and of all peoples. That life varies in intensity and depth and purity as the spiritual eye of the race is more or less clearly recipient and interpretative through growth. Through the very grossness of their natures men are disqualified for a correct interpretation of these divine impressions. Their own wills may be set against all obedience, for they are not constrained of necessity to listen to the voice within. Thus the *Free Will of Man* is a car-

dinal tenet of the Quakers, and here again their appeal is to Consciousness, not to any subtle argument. It is the direct "Argumentum ad hominem,"—"Do you not know of yourself that you can turn from the evil and choose the good, or abandon your spirit to the sinful and perishing?" In such liberty alone is moral responsibility possible, and the consciousness of freedom is a fundamental faith with the Friends.

But even unto the true disciple this inspiring influence is not an uninterrupted one. Its hours are uncertain, for it, too, has its times and seasons, its mysterious flittings off and on, and its long reaches of abiding and refreshing calm, which mortals cannot explain. But its uncertainty is in no way attributable to changeableness in God,—only to Man's unfaithfulness to the leadings of the spirit. Hence it is sometimes a dim, far off, uncertain intimation of the truth, and again it is a clear indication which it were recreancy to deny. At others it is a flash of conviction, stunning and smiting as

it smote St. Paul, or again it seems the ripening of a pure soul, and bursts into the glad surprise of a revelation in the heart of a St. John. But it must not be inferred that this inspiration is necessarily accompanied by miraculous signs and wonders. In "Essays" we find this statement : "This inspiration comes as naturally and as gently to us as does the light of the sun to illuminate the earth, and brings to the physical and intellectual faculties a knowledge of material things. . . . Its voice is heard in an hour of silent meditation, or while busied with our lawful avocations, or amid our times of relaxation and pleasure" (pp. 34 and 35). They also claim the graces and virtues of humanity as the fruit of this inspiration of the spirit. Abundant proofs of this claim will be found in "Penn's Rise and Progress," in Barclay, in Elias Hicks, et passim in their writings.

But here a special distinction must be observed, necessary to guard against a common misrepresentation of the Quakers. In

all its varied manifestations they never identify nor confound this spiritual force with material force in a pantheistic sense. It is thought, it is love, it is righteousness, it is justice, it is perfect holiness, and these can be the attributes of nothing but a living Personality in which they inhere. Their phraseology points continually to this fact. They speak of God almost universally as "Our Heavenly Father," or in words of similar meaning, and never in terms that indicate pantheism. While the universe is filled with him, he is not the universe, but transcends and controls it. So they have kept themselves free from all thought of the physical embodiment of God in a material form. He can no more have such a figure than thought and love can have it. He dwells among them as a living spirit, and they will tolerate no representation thereof. They accept the fact without attempting its solution.



CHAPTER IV.

Their Belief in Christ, and Salvation.

But the Hicksite Quakers are not trinitarians, and do not, save in very rare instances, accept the orthodox theory of the three-fold nature of the Supreme God,—they do not believe that God the Father is one Person, Jesus the Son another Person, the Holy Ghost another Person, each God, and the Three together constituting in some mysterious way, *only one God*. Jesus himself they regard as a mortal, a man, like unto other men, except that he kept himself, or was kept by the power of God which is the Christ, free from sin. They do not believe that *God* was crucified upon Calvary, nor that Jesus' blood, in and of itself, had or has any peculiar efficacy in ransoming the world. But they *do* believe in Jesus as *the*

Christ, the Anointed Son of God, the Savior, the Revelation of the Father. God was *in* Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. It was this presence of God in his fulness in the soul of Jesus that made him the unique Son of God, the revelation unto the world of the Eternal Good, *but did not make him God*. The Holy Ghost is to them one of the manifestations of the Supreme, and God in the heart of Man, God as revealed through Jesus Christ, and God as manifested in the operations of the Holy Spirit, are all one and the same Supreme. All men may become Sons of God, but Jesus *was* the unique Son of God, because his will was complete in its submission to the Will of the Father, and the Spirit of the Father dwelt in him in its fulness. He could save men from their sins, by leading them away from sin and into perfect unity with God. So unto them he is the Dear Master, The Savior, The Son of Man, The Son of God, The Reconciliation unto Salvation. They do not offer him worship as Deity, but they *do* confess him

as the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." They offer no explanation of *how* God was in Christ so perfectly, nor do they presume to tell where the human ceases and the Divine begins in Jesus nor in their own souls. Their own natures are a profound mystery to them. Conscious of certain powers of their own, they are equally conscious of the Infinite background of possibilities in which their being rests. If our common human nature lies open to the inspiration of the Divine, how much more so the transcendently pure and holy nature of Jesus, in whom the finite and the infinite coalesced in perfect unison. In that perfect union of the human and the divine lies the unapproachable mystery of the Savior's nature. It is still more clearly put in another extract from "Friends' Intelligencer and Journal" of January 4, 1890.

"We believe in the divinity of Christ as well as the humanity of Jesus. It was not the manhood alone that constituted the Son of God, but Christ in Jesus,—or the spirit

in the flesh, or God in man. Thus God was manifested in the flesh in Jesus, 'And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' "

As they keep close to the language of Scripture in speaking of Christ, so also do they in speaking of his mission upon Earth. They accept none of the mechanical theories of his atoning work. They do not believe he died to ransom humanity from the effects of Adam's sin, nor to appease an offended God, nor to balance the scales of an impartial and unswerving justice. The idea that Christ's sacrifice had in it anything of expiation in the sense of penalty for past sins, or of substituting the innocent Lord as the criminal in the place of guilty men, to satisfy the absolute justice of God, is utterly foreign to the Quaker mind. To them God's mercy is not so straitened by his justice that the latter must be satisfied before the former can have full sway in winning Man to the Father. Moreover, right and

justice are of no different nature in the Divine mind and in the human, and as an earthly court would outrage every sense of Justice by substituting an innocent person on the gallows for the murderer who has gone free, so would the High Court of Heaven fly in the face of every sense of right by exacting the death of the innocent Son of God as an expiation for the accumulated sins of humanity. The vicarious sacrifice, in the sense of substitution, found no supporters or at least very few among the Hicksite Quakers. But none the less they positively affirm that there is no salvation save in Christ. In Job Scott's "Salvation by Christ" occur these words:—"I am as sure there is no salvation out of Christ, as I am of anything in the world." But the question lies in what constitutes salvation. Thoughtful Quakers hold definite opinions on this point, for they recognize the fact that man's material or animal nature is indifferent or averse to the holy life of God, and incapable of attaining it without the

help of his Spirit. That Spirit has been working in all ages past, but supremely in Christ, revealing itself as it could in harmony with the freedom of man's will. Man cannot forcibly be converted to holiness, but must be freely enlightened and as freely brought to a knowledge of God—to obedience unto him and communion with him as the only source of light and peace. Jesus came in the Spirit to reveal God to man, and so to reconcile man to God, in the truest scriptural sense. By this revelation of God's love and mercy to his children, as well as by his own spirit of self-sacrifice and tenderness, he wins the heart of man from the life of the flesh to the life of the spirit, which is the inheritance of the Children of God. In thus bringing man to communion with the Father, he becomes his savior, he lifts the burden of his sins, and transplants him from strife and suffering into the kingdom of purity and peace, which is the Holy City, the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. Thus was given unto man the gift of Life

Eternal, in its true meaning. Ever and again do we hear the Savior's words from Quaker lips,—“And this is Life Eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” And as that knowledge is attainable *now*, so that life eternal may be entered upon in spirit here on earth. The Quaker faith is not deemed essential to escape a future perdition, but to aid a faithful humble striving after the Divine Life here and now. Its salvation is not a saving from a material hell, but from a life of sin, of uncleanness, of corruption, and of carnal pleasures, into a life of pure living, holy thinking and saintly aspiration.





CHAPTER V.

The Bible, Inspiration and Prayer.

In their utterances on religious subjects the Hicksite Friends use freely the language of the Bible, and draw their illustrations largely from it. They prefer to call it "The Scriptures of Truth." Again and again have I known them to retreat to its expressions as to an impregnable fortress in controversy, while they do not adhere to its *literal* meaning in their interpretations.*

* It is certainly singular that a people who are so very free in their spiritual interpretations of Scripture should adhere to the "Ipsissima verba," the very literal meaning, in the matter of oaths. They are strictly forbidden to take an oath, and the prohibition is based on the positive command of Jesus, "Swear not at all, etc." But why should they interpret this literally, and not also that equally positive command, "Take, therefore, no thought of the morrow, etc.," with reference to



FRIENDS' NINE PARTNERS' MEETING HOUSE,
DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK.

If asked to define their idea of God, they will probably answer ;—" God is a Spirit, and he who would worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." If asked if Jesus was " Very God of very God, of one substance with the Father," they will reply, —Jesus is " The Sent of the Father,"—"The Good Shepherd,"—" The Divine Light,"—" The Prince of Peace,"—language strictly scriptural, and quite as apt as any definitions of the Catechism. When urged to say what he thought of heaven, an old Friend answered me,—“ Behold, the kingdom of heaven is within thee.” It is a favorite expression of many preachers among them that “ The kindom of heaven cometh not with observation,” as confirming their faith in its purely spiritual nature. Many of them are diligent readers of the Bible, and their Discipline exhorts them to careful study thereof.

worldly foresight? For they are very prudent and prosperous people, caring zealously for the morrow's provision. Yet a complete consistency of opinion can hardly be expected.

Some of them love especially the grand and majestic language of Isaiah, and fairly revel in its inspiring strains. The only time I ever distinctly remember to have heard Rachel Barker, a Quaker Preacher of Poughkeepsie, was one "First Day" morning in the little white meeting house in Lafayette Place. There had been an unusually prolonged silence, when she rose, and in her full, strong voice burst into Isaiah's words : "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord ; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old," and followed them with a fervent invocation and a summons to her hearers to "Come home" to the judgment of the Living Voice in their own hearts, that sounded like the trumpet peal of a Messenger of God.

At another time, one winter's evening, during the thrilling experiences of old Anti-Slavery times, Lucretia Mott and some prominent Friends sat by the fireside of a humble farmer's family near Poughkeepsie. The conversation had run long on the

sufferings of the slaves, which she had pictured so vividly before their eyes as to enlist the sympathies of all, when a deep silence suddenly fell upon the room. For a few seconds she sat with bowed head and folded hands, as in deep meditation. Then slowly raising her head, and clasping her hands more closely, in a voice soft and musical as only *her* voice *could* be, she said with measured utterance :

“ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

“ And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.”

Then, turning to her host, she added ; “ There is comfort in it, Peter.” And Peter answered, “ Yes, Lucretia, the Comforter will come.” And again the silence fell upon them, and the incident struck deep into the

soul of one listening Boy, who here narrates an experience of his own Quaker home, the memory of which comes like a fast-receding voice on the still air of contemplation.

But with all this fondness for Scripture and familiarity with it for quotation, there is no devotion to the letter thereof. "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life." For the Hicksite Quaker the Bible, like everything else, must be freely brought to the test of the Inward Light, and a truth derives no additional authority from being found within its covers. Its authority lies not at all in its inerrancy, nor in the authenticity of its various books in point of authorship, nor in its infallible teachings. It is a precious Book, and a source of inestimable comfort and strength, because it is a record, correct in the main, of God's dealings with his people in other times, and so becomes corroborative of the Living Witness in their own hearts. It *contains* the "Word of God" as given to holy men and interpreted by them, but not every word of

the Bible is the "Word of God," nor is it their "Only rule and guide for faith and practice." They reject the equivalent ideas of plenary inspiration and infallible authority, maintaining that much of it is clearly human and in no way binding on the consciences of men. But it must not be inferred that the Quakers reject entirely the doctrine of the *inspiration* of the Bible. On the other hand they emphatically affirm that holy men were inspired then and in other ages too, and from the heights of that inspiration wrote for all time and for all classes of people, bearing faithful witness to the truth revealed unto them by the Spirit of God. The eternal nature of that truth is certified by the same Holy Spirit in the hearts of men now, and so God's revelation is made authoritative. If it is urged against this view that revelation becomes an individual matter, the Quaker's ready reply is that it was so in the case of the Bible writers themselves, has been so and is so even yet. That inspiration does not involve the infalli-

bility of the individual inspired as a teacher, is likewise maintained, and they point to the fact that the authors of the various books of the Bible nowhere claim to write without possibility of error. Even if they *did* so write, to maintain that impossibility of error would involve an infallible translator, an infallible transcriber, and an infallible interpreter, and the issue would be the establishment of a hierarchy of interpretation not inferior in its pretensions to the claims of the Priestly Hierarchy of the Church of Rome. It is thus for its spiritual content that the Bible is prized by the Quakers, and not for its authoritative issuance directly from the hand of God. None the less is it held in sincerest reverence as the great depository of faith through the ages, though not the *final* nor the *only* one. Its inestimable value lies in its witness to the truth and in its testimony to the Christ, and all Members are advised in their Discipline to instruct their children "That the same blessed experience of the word of sanctifica-

tion through the operation of the Spirit of Truth, to which they (the Scriptures) clearly bear testimony is to be witnessed now, as in former ages, by all who attend to its manifestations." "Search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." They thus refuse to acknowledge the Bible as authority over the souls of men. If God inspired its writers, so will he give us inspirations suited to our needs, as he gave to them. Whatever Moses or David or Paul experienced in his communion with the Most High, was imperative law for him, but the record of that experience cannot supersede the overshadowing presence of God's Spirit with our spirits, nor stifle the voice with which he persuades us of righteousness and truth. Thus the Bible is strength and comfort and confirmation in the faith, but it is not itself the fountain nor the all-sufficient source of truth. That fountain is the Eternal Father, the Immanent God, and no other. So positive is their teaching on this

point, that it will be better to let their own words speak for them in the matter, as they will thus define their own position in relation to the Bible.

In "Essays" are found extracts concerning the Bible which are very clear in meaning. On page 73 is this; "I would ever keep its teachings secondary, and only corroborative of the immediate inspiration of the Inner Light." And again on page 71; "The Scriptures possess a deep intrinsic value as a corroborative evidence of what is immediately revealed to the Soul of Man." And a true reverence and humility are exhibited in this little extract from "Essays"; "I would then be understood to be a believer in all the truths contained in the Bible so far as I understand them, while I would not be understood as disbelieving those that I do not understand, for much that seems mysterious and incomprehensible now, may yet be unfolded in the future, as much has been in the past." Likewise in "Sermons" we find these utterances, page 32; "We must

go beyond the Scriptures, and become acquainted with that which was before them," namely, God ! On page 33 we have ; " See how clear these Scriptures are ; they need no further proof than that they corroborate the Divine Truth as it is revealed in our own souls." And again on page 18 we find ; " There is a great deal that is very valuable in the Scriptures, and that may be a great encouragement to us, but we must go to that source and foundation which existed before the Scriptures were written, and that is our heavenly Father ; and his word still continues to be for our instruction." These sentiments were universal among Hicksite Friends. Nay more, they were the sentiments of Quakers long before they were divided into Hicksite and Orthodox, for Barclay, in his celebrated " Apology," says that the Scriptures " May be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty ; for as by the inward testimony of the Spirit do we alone truly know

them, so they testify that the Spirit is that Guide by which the Saints are led into all truth ; therefore, according to the Scriptures the Spirit is the first and principal leader."

Still further evidence on this point is the following extract from the "Friends' Intelligencer and Journal," Jan. 4, 1890, being a reprint from the same paper of Oct. 14, 1865.

"We are told in Scripture, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.'" This is what we recognize as the *Word of God*,—even the power of God uncreated, and the Scriptures are the fruit of this power. They are the words of God. They were created *by this Word* that was in the beginning. Hence we cannot recognize them as the Word of God, for they were created, and the Word of God never was

created, but was in the beginning with God, and was God.

These extracts serve to put their estimate of the Bible in its true light. Holding such opinions, they have been undisturbed by all the difficulties about the Authorship of the books of the Bible, or its vindication from errors of fact as charged by men like Bishop Colenzo. And the struggle now going on over the so-called "Higher Criticism" has no interest for a people who look to the immediate inspiration of God himself as the fountain of all spiritual knowledge.

For in their estimate of it, no errors of translators or transcribers, nor errors of numbers nor yet of scientific statement, could in the least detract from its value as a witness to the truth of God. Whether the account of creation in Genesis is chronologically correct or not, God was, "In the beginning" still the origin of all things. And in like manner the truth of Christ's revelation of the Father remains unaltered, whatever may be the disagreements of the writers on

minor points of fact. It will thus be seen that their faith in Christian Truth and Love and Practice is above and independent of all destructive or constructive criticism. The value of the Scriptures, *for them*, can never be diminished by any errors in the text of the sacred writings, for the text has no part in making the truth. It is *the spirit* of the Scriptures, not its *infallibility*, which they prize. And as a natural result of this indifference to the exact agreement of the Gospels may be traced in large part, the fact that they have produced no great names in Biblical research, though diligent readers of the New Testament in particular. For the same reason they have given little heed to verbal exegesis, and have taken no part in the various textual discussions of other denominations.

With such ideas of God, of silent worship, of Christ, and of the Bible, it is plain the Quakers must be a devout and prayerful people. But to *public* prayer, in assemblies, they attach but little importance. They hold

that the *permanent attitude* of the devout soul is one of prayer,—of reverent, expectant waiting on the Spirit of the Lord. The uttered petition does not constitute prayer at all, though genuine prayer, through the movings of the Holy Spirit, may issue in spoken petitions. It is the submissive longing of the heart, feeling in utter self-abasement a thirst after the Righteousness of God,—a perfect sense of obedience to the voice within, whispering in mysterious ways the persuasions of duty, and the peace of assured acceptance. And their answer to prayer is a purely spiritual one. It comes in the conscious illumination of the soul,—in clearer perceptions of duty,—in a deeper and more abiding assurance of peace in God's love,—sometimes it comes in quickened intellectual perceptions, and a deeper insight into the meanings of events. The depth and power of Scripture are often "opened" to them in response to this prayerful attitude of the soul. Sudden impressions, flashed upon them in this mood,

will change the direction of a contemplated journey, and stay or hasten the utterance of some "testimony" against a popular evil. To "Pray without ceasing" is the very atmosphere of Quakerism.

Thus their faith in God, in Christ, in Prayer, is more an element of their very being than an imposition from without. Their religion is wrought into the very fiber of their daily life. No people I have ever known have been more thoroughly saturated with their religious convictions than the Quakers are, none have struggled more resolutely to realize their religion every moment. They strive to make their faith a living reality,—*to feel* their prayer, and *to know* its multitudinous answer, written by the finger of God on the tablets of the heart, though they find ever renewed the truth that,

"Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the unspoken."

But these people *talk* very little about their religion, and discourage all noisy

demonstrations. They are not "Garrulous of their dealings with God," and frown upon noisy revivals and seasons of religious excitement, as obstacles to the more quiet and enduring work of the Spirit. Very vividly do I remember how, in a time of great religious feverishness, a dear Friend and neighbor approached my father with the blunt but well-meant question,—“Have you ever got religion, Peter?” “What did thee say?” was the surprised reply. “Have you ever got religion?” “Not much, not much,” was the quiet answer, “but my peace was made long ago,—my Father and I are at one,—I have no need of thee,” and with a dignified wave of the hand he dismissed the intruder, then closed the gate by which they had stood, and turning away left his questioner to meditate on the complete confidence of the Quaker who had never “got religion” in *his* peculiar way. But in their private gatherings by their own firesides, when no curious outsiders were present, they have often narrated their

rich spiritual experiences, and spoken of their seasons of blessed communion and peace. They comfort, strengthen and encourage one another at such times, though they rarely gratify curiosity by unveiling the Holy of Holies within them to the gaze of the uninitiated. There is something commendable in this reticence before "the world's people" about their own spiritual experiences, as though they constituted a sacred precinct of life, the very ground of its blessed beauty and harmony, too hallowed for vulgar criticism, and each member became as a string of a delicate harp, while from the whole, attuned in perfect unison, burst forth that music which is divine.





CHAPTER VI.

The Sacraments and the Ministry.

There is nothing in the society of Friends more unique than their theories of Baptism and of the Christian Ministry. They allow no baptism but the baptism of the Spirit, and require none either for admission to membership or the Ministry. They hold that the baptism of water has been superseded, and that John the Baptist foretold its discontinuance when he said ; “ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” John’s baptism was the forerunner and the symbol of the baptism of the Spirit, which they say, is “ The true, real and only effective baptism that could purify and cleanse

the man from all the pollutions of sin." ("Essays," page 77, et passim.) They thus abolished the outward sign and retained only its inward significance.

So too they had no rite of confirmation and no creed nor confession of faith to be subscribed,—nothing but the seal of God on their own hearts. They did not need the visible bread and wine of the sacramental feast to call to their remembrance the Blessed Lord, on whose spiritual body and blood they hourly fed, and so their Ministry was not a body of men set apart for the performance of these rites, nor with any priestly functions whatever. They had not even a ceremony of ordination, or setting apart, only an approval by a meeting of Ministers and Elders, and a recommendation by them, under the firm belief that the only consecration for the Ministry of the Word must be accomplished by the immediate influence and teaching of the Holy Spirit. The following extracts from "Essays" will best show their position:

“ The preparation requisite . . . is an entire submission of the will of the man to the Divine Will ; a keeping the spiritual ear open to the instructions received through the revelations of immediate inspiration ; a passive learning the lessons that each day’s revelations bring, and a patient waiting for the divine command to enter the work, without anxiety as to the where, the how, or the manner in which he will require us to labor ” (pp. 26 and 29). The Minister must thus feel himself moved to bear testimony to the Grace of God, and must prove his calling by the edification and strengthening of the Brethren. No intellectual tests are imposed, no Course in College or Seminary is required. The worthlessness of intellectual and literary qualifications alone is affirmed as follows ; “ Without this inspiration, no matter how sound the doctrine, how well arranged the words, or how eloquently spoken, it does not reach the heart ; it only pleases the human ear for the time, and proves of no lasting benefit, neither tending

to encourage the halting or desponding, nor to discourage the selfish, the high-minded, or the callous and indifferent from pursuing their improper course of life " (pp. 26 and 29). They further think that he who is to bear the Word in his ministry will be given what he shall say, and has no need of forethought or preparation. It is a remarkable fact that the Preacher sometimes feels impelled to speak by the urgency of the Spirit within, in spite of his own wish to be silent. John Woolman says that he " Frequently felt a necessity to stand up, when the spring of the ministry was low." He was " Reluctant to say too much," but was impelled onward by what he believed to be the Divine Presence and Power. It is not an uncommon thing to hear preachers say that their own preference is to be silent, but the Will of God is manifested unto them, and they must bear its testimony. In " Sermons," page 53, is this statement, a common one for preachers; " I have spoken that which has come before me, not one word of

which I had when I sat down." For this ministry no amount of scholastic training availed anything,—God's consecrating hand laid upon his soul alone can open the way to its profitable exercise, and this is in strict harmony with their views of God's immanence. But the further corollary of this is that as he receives his precious gift without money and without price from God, he must so impart of its blessings without pay of any kind. No genuine Hicksite Quaker Minister can accept a salary in any shape. They have always borne an unswerving testimony against a "Hireling Ministry, as directly opposed to the Spirit in which Jesus and his apostles labored for the advancement of his kingdom upon earth. This position no doubt involves a literalness of meaning that proves too much even for the Quakers, for Christ had not where to lay his head ;" no wife, no home, no abiding place for his weary body. If the Quaker Minister would imitate his Blessed Master so literally in all things, he too, must take up the burden of

his houseless and homeless ministry, and go as did the Christ from place to place as the Spirit called him, trusting to the Providence of God to feed and clothe, and sustain him in his task. Yet few things would be more utterly foreign to the practical habits of the thrifty Quakers. Their ministry is open to any who may feel called to participate therein, and can satisfy their meeting that they possess the necessary anointing of the spirit, and give evidence that they have been with Christ in holy places.

This absence of all intellectual and literary qualifications no doubt made the deliverances of most of their Preachers too commonplace and monotonous, with too little of that variety which is necessary even in the most spiritual of "Conferences." Many mistook their own inclinations for the promptings of God, and failed in the edification of the Brethren, merely repeating with ceaseless iteration scriptural passages whose meaning they ignorantly wrested

from their true import. Yet of what ministry cannot the same thing be said? How many of our educated Clergy fall far short of the mark of the ideal preacher must be manifest to any patient listener to the average pulpit utterances. But with the Quakers this difficulty was increased by their peculiar tenets. Men who earn their bread by manual labor, as most Quakers do, can scarcely be expected to attain much refinement or elegant persuasiveness of speech. And yet they have produced preachers of rare and winning power, who have delivered their messages of "Peace on earth, and Good Will to men" with great acceptance. I have often been struck by the magnificent flights of fancy, the grandeur of imagination and the striking figures of speech which characterize the utterances of some of their ablest Ministers. The highly poetic nature of Quaker mysticism is often reflected in their quaint but effective sermons, and direct and powerful appeals to special duties have often come from their lips.

Then, too, they have kept their Ministry quite as free from current agnosticism and scepticism as any denomination. In the great freedom allowed by them, preachers have arisen who sought to be the propagators of doubt, unbelief, and sometimes even of atheism, and who have tried to maintain their right to deliver such testimony in the public meetings for worship. But these apostles of materialism have been invariably discountenanced and silenced by their Society, or finally disowned altogether, when they refused to recognize their want of unity with the fundamentals of Quakerism. In this way they have tried to maintain the integrity and strictly religious character of their acknowledged Ministry, while still permitting a very generous liberty of expression to all parties. They always insisted on moderation in their utterances, and sometimes opinions with which they felt no unity, but which were uttered with modesty and evident seeking for clearer light, were left unrebuked, and with kind

commendations to the Supreme Voice of God in the heart. Hesitation they could tolerate, denial not at all. Their Ministry was devoutly Christian, or nothing.





CHAPTER VII.

Miracles, Immortality, and Evil.

It will thus be seen how these people seek to reduce all the rites and ceremonials of religion to their elementary spiritual significance. And for such thinkers, whose lives are a continuous miracle from the direct inspiration of the Father, and who see in the material world the vast theatre of his immediate action and control, the physical side of miracles, commonly so called, has indeed but little significance. As a rule they neither affirm nor deny miracles but quote them for the spiritual lesson they convey. Their faith does not depend on any recorded events, miraculous or otherwise, for its evidence, as a daily miracle of God's communion and inspiration is wrought within them in great power. And what is

true of other miracles is equally true of the resurrection of Christ, which they interpret as symbolizing the resurrection of the soul from the grave of spiritual impotency, blindness and sin to the glorious freedom of the children of God. I have never known them to cite the resurrection of our Lord as proof of Man's immortality, but always in its spiritual bearings. Indeed, the whole fabric of modern Quakerism stands on this consciousness of immediate communion with God, on the teachings of the Light within. From that they draw their Moral Law, and all its imperative sanctions. From that likewise they derive their proof for immortality. And yet again and again have I heard the assertion by men ignorant of their real faith that they do not believe in the immortal life, or as it is usually put ; "The Quakers don't believe in heaven, do they ?" In such cases the questioners confound "Heaven" and "Immortality," while the Quakers keep them entirely distinct in their minds. With them heaven is not a locality,

nor a time, but a spiritual condition, the state of unity and communion with God and Christ, and is attainable here and now as well as in the future life. "Behold the kingdom of heaven *is* within you," not *will be*, but immediately *is*. But they are firm believers in the undying nature of the human soul, while they make no auguries of its future state, neither promising it the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, nor threatening it with the burning deeps of hell. Their Discipline speaks of "The uncertainty of this life, and the great importance of a preparation for that which is to come." (Page 37, edition of 1872.) Elias Hicks, probably their greatest preacher, in his last letter, says ; "For it has ever been the lot of the righteous to pass through many trials and tribulations in their passage to that glorious, everlasting, peaceful and happy abode, where all sorrow and sighing come to an end." In the "Essays" the Author repeatedly refers to "The Future Life,"—to "Man's immortal nature,"—to

the "Enjoyment of the eternal World,"—to "The Courts of Heaven, both in the present and the future life," and such expressions and allusions may be found in all their writings and utterances. Words must lose their meaning before such people can be said to have lost their faith in immortality. It is true that the main stress of Quakerism is the attainment of the Divine Life *now*, wisely judging that he who takes counsel of the Spirit of God in his own heart, will not wander far from the eternal fold in the life beyond. They propound no "Scheme of salvation" from hell and the Devil, only a present and continual salvation from our own selfishness and base desires. They have no belief in original sin, in total depravity, in a personal devil or a localized hell, and so need no aid of any scheme to save them. Their Satan is the uninspired flesh, with its carnal lusts and passions; their hell the condition of indifference to the life of God, and of Christ, or alienation from it, here or hereafter. From this satan and this

hell they would be saved by being born into the communion of God the Father, as was Jesus. Evil, they say, is perverted good, consequent upon man's free will and his liberty of choice essential to the development of a moral being, and beyond that they attempt no solution of its origin, though they stoutly insist that it has no source in a personal devil. Above all do they firmly deny all foreordination and predestination, and plant themselves squarely on the moral accountability of every person, and his ability, if humble and willing to heed God's warnings, to mould himself after the divine ideal. They are thus unencumbered by complicated theories of evil, and they are no doubt wise in freeing their worship from all subtleties concerning it. It is not so much a knowledge of the source whence evil comes that humanity craves, as it is the means by which man may overcome it and triumph in holiness. Whatever theory we may adopt, there will always remain an unexplained residuum in the problem ; and to

thoughtful minds, the awful fact of vice and sin and wickedness in humanity will be one of the insoluble enigmas of existence. Without seeking its solution, they can look death and eternity in the face, and shrink not back in dread and terror. Comforted by the ever present Power, which is alike in the *Now* and in the *Hereafter*, they go serenely and trustingly into the mysteries that sleep forever beyond the visible boundaries of Being. And so their childlike faith attains its perfect consummation.

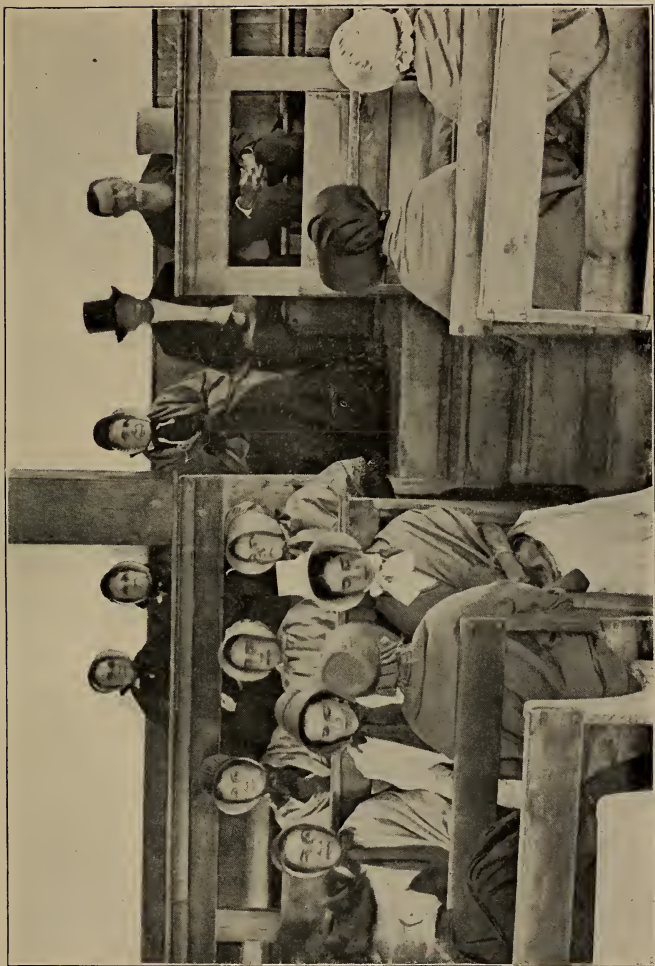




CHAPTER VIII.

They are Christians and Mystics.

Having thus briefly stated the main points of the Hicksite Quaker faith, every tenet of which can be found in some parts of early Christianity, it remains to make some classification of them in regard to it. What are they? Heretics, infidels, pantheists, or plain Christians? It is difficult to see more than one answer to the question, or how we can fail to classify them as the most positive kind of Christians. To say that they live "Without God and Religion in the world" is an outrage on the meaning of words. If these people know them not, what can the terms "God" and "Religion" mean? Or can we with any better reason call them Pantheists, while we remember that the purest Personality is in-



FRIENDS' MEETING IN SESSION.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

volved in the use of such terms as "Love," "Righteousness," "Divine Purpose," and "Perfect Holiness?" Did you ever hear of righteous sticks and stones or stars? Or of the holiness of the earth and moon? As well might we say both, as to affirm "Pantheism" of the Quaker faith! With just as little reason can we hesitate to call them Christians, because they cannot go through the Augsburg Confession, and the Heidelberg or Westminster Catechisms, or the thirty-nine Articles of the Episcopal Church. Jesus made no such tests, imposed no such examens on his disciples. "Follow me" is the Master's summons, and the Quakers have tried to obey it. To question their place in the legions of Christianity is to affirm that men may be imbued with the spirit of Christ, meekly and reverently seek to follow in his footsteps according to the light that is given them,—may humbly struggle against sin and all manner of uncleanness in his name,—may bear the visible marks of his gentleness and love about them,—

may fight a good fight in his strength, and finish the course in innocence and rectitude ;—may do all this, and yet, for some metaphysical opinion not exactly conformable to another's creed, may be outcasts from his kingdom, aliens from his Father's Love, and minions of darkness rather than Children of the Light. Let him believe such a creed who can, I have no sympathy with a Christianity that spurns these manifest marks of discipleship, and seeks a test other than such as is learned at the very feet of Jesus. It is from that very source the Quaker seeks to learn,—from the very Spirit which made Jesus the Christ unto men.

There can be little doubt that a just estimate of the Quakers will place them in the ranks of the Mystics, always a considerable power in the Church, yet always a class somewhat vague and indefinite in its limitations. Any definition will seem imperfect, yet one of the best is that given by Rev. James Martineau of London, in a remark-

able sermon entitled, "The Tides of the Spirit," in which he says ; "The Mystic would mould himself into accordance with the divine constancy by spreading the margin of his prayer till it covers the whole of life ; and would let out the imprisoned glory of his highest mood to transfigure all the years." The devout Quaker seems to have aimed at precisely this moulding of himself into harmony with the constancy of God,—at making his whole nature like a harp whose every string is sensitive to the slightest touch of the Divine. It matters not that some may think this impossible of attainment, for a few souls have always sought it, and many of them have proved an inspiration and means of revival within the confines of the Militant Church. The Quakers sought such attainment while mingling in the busy world, and not by retiring into meditative solitude. They were no monks nor hermits, but loving children of God. Their ideas are as old as the Church itself, and many and honorable names are

embraced in the list of those who have held them. Eckhart, Origen, Lauler, Bernard of Clairvaux, the Saintly Fenelon of Cambray, Madame Guyon, and many a lesser light, have pointed to the same heavenly road that the Quakers show the true disciple. The Roman Catholic Communion has been especially fruitful in mystics of a high order, differing from each other according to their natures and the times upon which they were cast, but agreeing with each other and with all mystics in a few cardinal tenets. These are, for the most part, *the immanence of God in his Creatures*, his presence in the fulness of infinite power ; the reality of direct communion between his spirit and man's spirit ; that this communion is conditional upon the entire submission of the human will to the divine ; and that in this conscious presence of God and Christ lies the real meaning of all religion, and our only certainty of acceptance with Him who is the Author of all. One common characteristic is the tendency to ignore the forms

of sacraments and set orders of worship, and to trust in ecstatic visions and visitations. Some sought to know the very Essence of God by complete absorption into his will and love. This speculative side of Mysticism the Quakers did not adopt, but gave themselves to the devotional and practical side, which seeks the experience of immediate communion with the Father, and the realization of heaven in the heart while on earth. The protest against a heartless conformity with external forms is common to nearly all mystics. In reading Lauler's account of his own conversion, one might fancy himself reading an extract from Fox or Woolman, so similar are the experiences. The Mendicant Catholic Friar bade Madame Guyon hear the voice of God in the silence of her own heart, words well adapted to the speech of an old-time Quaker preacher. They all have seasons of great desolation of spirit, when the struggle seems to have gone hopelessly against them, and God to have abandoned them. Then again

their souls will rise to sublimer heights, as on the wings of light, and they will spiritually dwell with God and Christ.

But there is one feature of Quakerism which must not be omitted and by which it is widely separated from extreme mysticism. Many of the older mystics, like Eckhart and even Madame Guyon, sought to merge their own personal being in the personality of God. In the heights of their communion with the divine, they would lose their own identity,—and personal annihilation was the issue they aimed at. This is Pantheism, pure and simple, the Nirvana of the eastern mystic,—the destruction of the Ego in the Supreme. From this impotent conclusion the Quakers have been saved. However intimate the communion they experience, they never for an instant merge the human in the Divine, never lose their distinct personality. They were and are too intensely realistic for such a conclusion. They seek to envelope life in the atmosphere of heaven ; but that only conse-

crates life, without *evacuating* it of its human nature. And thus they escape the greatest danger of mysticism, which, carried to extremes, is but another word for individual annihilation.

The mystics, at different periods in the history of the Christian Church, have proved themselves the very fountains of life and devotion, and have done much to keep alive our holy religion in its purity. But they have never been numerous for the simple reason that the high spiritual tension required of them is unattainable by the average toiling, struggling Christian. The subjective element is too predominating in their experiences, and men are hardly competent to take religion reduced to its unembodied spiritualities as their everyday nourishment, but require a healthy mixture of embodied temporalities. Even the most saintly among them cannot keep permanently the heights of exaltation he can temporarily attain. As Wordsworth writes,

“ ’Tis difficult to keep
Heights which the soul is competent to win.”

This permanent altitude of the soul was made more difficult still with the Quakers, for they discarded all the sacraments, all the outward signs and symbols by which men are wont to call to mind the inward grace, and which they use as aids in its attainment, and threw the spirit directly upon the contemplation and experience of the deep significance of Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Communion without the enacting of the rite itself, relying solely on the purely Spiritual powers to give sign of quickened life within. No doubt this discarding all visible aids to faith has resulted in an exalted spirituality with the chosen few, whose souls are strung Sensitive to all intimations of the Divine. But it has as certainly set a mark of Discipleship too high for common attainment, and necessarily limited the Society to the peculiar ones, who are capable of dwelling in the high places of worship. Moreover, it has, in this way reduced all spiritual experiences to one pattern, and so developed in many in-

stances, one of its most manifest weaknesses, an utter incompetency to appreciate and estimate any religious experiences not shaped after the pattern of its own. It is a common fault of enthusiasts, and some of the Quakers share it with others.





CHAPTER IX.

Some Further Considerations.

The hostility of the Quakers to a "Hireling Ministry" and their reluctance to enter into any common worship not involving their own forms, have kept them isolated, a religious community by themselves. With some this prejudice was so strong that they disliked to attend funerals conducted by salaried clergymen. Their religious sympathies with other denominations were not kept sufficiently lively and interested, and very rarely found any public expression at all. They never interfered in the slightest degree with any other worship, observing the strictest neutrality in the differences of others, and always maintaining the right of every man to worship as he would. Some of the first Roman Catholics who came here

found the mystical Quakers their stoutest defenders in their right to establish the Holy Church on American soil, though with the services conducted by the Priesthood they had no sympathy whatever. In my own home our Father strictly forbade us to intimate by word or deed any dislike for Catholicism when a new farm-hand came who was a Catholic. But with all their liberality in this respect, their minds were kept so intent on the contemplation of one peculiar phase of God's self-revelation as to disqualify them for a just appreciation of other modes of His manifestation, and they thus missed that comprehensive religious sympathy so essential to a body ministering to the wants and aspirations of large numbers of souls. The Society was thus kept limited in numbers and shorn of much of the strength that might have resulted from inter-communion with other denominations.

With their peculiar and exclusive ideas of "Waiting on the Lord in silence," the Quakers could admit no music into their

worship, and in their protest against the frivolities of life they shut out the cultivation of its harmonies and melodies from the household, thus encroaching some on the ground of extreme Puritanism. In this way they lost to themselves one of the best allies of all worship, one of the purest inspirations of exalted feeling and belittled one of humanity's most sacred gifts. By a similar intensity of faith and exaggerated zeal to rebuke the follies of the world, they ignored the divine instinct of personal adornment in the young, and reduced their dress to an exact formula as to pattern, color and trimmings. To such an extreme of exacting scruples were they sometimes carried, as to lead a young woman out of the meeting who wore too many ribbons of a bright hue. These same Friends, who protested so earnestly against devotion to the fashions of the world, adopted a fashion of their own, and adhered to it with such tenacity, that some travelled from Poughkeepsie to Philadelphia for the sole purpose of procuring

clothing of the appropriate cut and appearance. But many of them outgrew this species of fetichism and discarded the plain style of coat on the ground of inconsistency in taking so much trouble to secure it. My own Father was one of the number. Not only the severe plainness of their dress, but also the barrenness and dreariness of their meeting-houses, and the absence of home decoration, seemed to fly into the very face of that sense of artistic grace and beauty which is ever springing up in the heart of man and craving utterance. They seem to have been ignorant of the fact that God's revelations of himself are not confined to the immediate inner life of Man, but that he speaks to the mind in the intricacies of science, to the imagination in every line of grace, in every form of symmetry, and in every beauty of color and delicacy of tint or of sound ; and to the heart in every holy affection for wife or children or mankind. By the very intensity of faith and devotion Quakerism has passed too much into a

stereotyped form of worship, and a set style of dress and speech, with little allowance for the progress of theological development, or the changing demands of a civilization that cannot pause. It has tried to mould its birthright members after one spiritual pattern, to make them, too, a marked and peculiar people in speech, in dress and in conduct. For the attainment of this purpose, righteous enough in itself, but mistaken in its aim, they have assumed a minuteness of supervision reaching into all the details of life. That supervision is the more offensive, as it is vested in the members of the Meeting, and not in any one person trained to the work. The tyranny of the multitude is ever more exacting and less amenable to reason than tyranny of the single man. So this Society has made few converts, and has steadily lost to other denominations those born into its birthright membership, while not a few are waiting in silence the developments of the new with a half suspended allegiance to the old ; and some, alone, and

aloof from sympathy with religion at all, are treading the mysterious and chilling ways of Agnosticism, that realm of thought and feeling whose only prayer is a cry of ignorance, and where no mid-day sun of trust nor midnight star of hope guides the wanderer to his eternal rest.

And Quakerism has been a peculiar phase of Mysticism in this too, that it has left little impression on the general or theological literature of its time. This result is inevitable from its theory of the ministry of the word, and its general deportment towards the learned professions. Its ministers need no special training if what they are to say is given them directly from the impressions of the Holy Spirit. They are to wait till those impressions come, and not attempt to gild the very speech of God with refinements of rhetoric or oratory. But the law was practically closed to the earnest Quaker, and medicine seems to have had little attraction for them. So none of the learned professions have been enlisted in behalf of

their living faith, and the Society has left but few literary remains that will survive the test of time. There is a uniformity in all their expressions and experiences, and a narrowness in the range of thought, that promises little of perpetuity to their writings. They have been too busy with the devotional and ethical phase of their cultus to be very productive in the field of letters. Believing, as they do, that God works through human instrumentalities, they neglected the parallel fact, that the more delicately fashioned and perfected the instrument is, the more perfect its display of the various powers committed to its keeping. The harp that would sing in many tones needs more than a single string.

But it must not be forgotten that the Quakers have long been active promoters of educational interests. Some of the earliest Boarding Schools in the country were founded by them, and in Dutchess County Old "Nine Partners" long held a prominent place. Not only have they maintained

excellent schools, but Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania is a monument of their desire for the higher education. Its President is one of the most accomplished educators of the day, and ranks among the first in literary attainment. Ezra Cornell, the Founder of Cornell University, one of the greatest educational institutions of the day, was a Quaker. Still it must be noted that those who have achieved the most have not done it through the direct influence of the meeting, and very few old-time Quakers have attained eminence in letters or in art.

Quakerism however, has given us our most truly National Poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, the Singer most identified with the People, and most in sympathy with their aspirations. In *his* song the true Quaker sentiment has found its highest and most perfect expression, while the white-haired singer kept his place among the silent worshippers on "First Day" mornings. Its truths are fresh and vital in his mind, and he has uttered them in his verse freely. In

“The Pennsylvania Pilgrim” he has put the very spirit of their worship into his song :

“Lowly before the Unseen Presence knelt
Each waiting heart, till haply some one felt
On his moved lips the seal of silence melt.

“Or, without spoken words, low breathings stole
Of a diviner life, from soul to soul,
Baptizing in one tender thought the whole.”

The last three lines are full of the deep meaning of a “Silent Meeting” among the Friends. So, too, their sense of God’s Providence is given in these stanzas from “The Eternal Goodness.”

“And so beside the silent Sea
I wait the muffled Oar ;
No harm can come from him to me
On ocean or on shore.

“I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air ;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.”

What "heretics" they are, these Quakers
to put so absolute a trust in God's guardian
care ! Would that such "heresy" were
common in the land !

In the exquisite poem "The Prayer of
Agassiz" he has given utterance to their
thought of prayer.

"Then the master in his place
Bowed his head a little space,
And the leaves by soft airs stirred,
Lapse of wave and cry of bird
Left the solemn hush unbroken
Of that wordless prayer unspoken,
While its wish, on earth unsaid,
Rose to heaven interpreted.
As, in life's best hours, we hear
By the Spirit's finer ear
His low voice within us, thus
The All-Father heareth us ;
And his holy ear we pain
With our noisy words and vain ;
Not for Him our violence
Storming at the gates of sense,
His the primal language, his
The eternal Silences."

And again in the Prologue to "Miriam" he touches their faith in the Immanent God, when he speaks of

"The tokens of that primal Force,
Older than heaven itself, yet new
As the young heart it reaches to,
Beneath whose steady impulse rolls
The tidal wave of human souls ;
Guide, Comforter and Inward Word !
The Eternal Spirit of the Lord !"

And yet again he says :

"Since everywhere the Spirit walks
The garden of the heart, and talks
With man, as under Eden Trees,
In all his varied languages."

.

"By inward sense, by outward signs,
God's presence still the heart divines."

In "The Meeting" is found a still more complete statement of Quaker Belief and practice. There, too, they will find, mirrored in the sweetest verse, more than one of the little prejudices which disfigure the

Friendly Escutcheon. In this very poem of "The Meeting" he gives a skilful thrust at music, and art, and learning in the pulpit :

" I ask no organ's soulless breath
To drone the themes of life and death,
No altar candle-lit by day,
No ornate wordsman's rhetoric play,
No cool philosophy to teach
Its bland audacities of speech
To double-tasked idolaters
Themselves their Gods and worshippers,
No pulpit hammered by the fist
Of loud asserting dogmatist,
Who borrows from the hand of love
The smoking thunderbolts of Jove."

But in higher moods he rises above all carping criticism and prejudice of sect, and sings the Quaker faith in God's universal presence in exulting strains :

" I trace His presence in the blind
Pathetic gropings of my kind,—
In prayers from sin and sorrow wrung,
In cradle-hymns of life they sung.

Each, in its measure, but a part
Of the unmeasured Over-Heart."

—*Miriam*, p. 342.

Or with yet clearer emphasis he says :

"Somewhat of goodness, something true
From sun and spirit shining through
All faiths, all worlds, as through the dark
Of ocean shines the lighthouse spark,
Attests the presence everywhere
Of love and providential care."

But we cannot linger among his delightful songs. In all his moods, he is evermore the Dear Old Quaker Poet.





CHAPTER X.

A Summary.

Upon the weaknesses of the Quaker Organization it is not my purpose to dwell at any length. Mysticism has not, of itself, sufficient coherence to form the basis of a permanent society. And when, to the tenets of Mysticism, is added a kind of asceticism in dress and speech and conduct, which is entirely foreign to the atmosphere of these days, it needs no prophetic mind to foresee the ultimate disappearance of the Friends as a Society or a total change in some fundamental characteristics. That Society has produced a noble type of Manhood and of Womanhood, saintly souls in unity with high ideals of God and of Humanity. It has proclaimed the Immanent Father, consciously active in the souls of men, and the

great trend of Christianity to-day is away from other theories, and toward this of immanence. It has defended absolute toleration in worship, and advocated the superiority of Man to all institutions. It has stood for the spirit of the Scriptures as against the letter thereof,—for Man's Free Will and Moral Accountability before God, as against Augustinianism, Calvinism and Necessity. The greatest advance in Theology for the last century has been away from the necessitarians and towards those of the Alexandrian Greeks,—away from a literal construction towards a spiritual interpretation of the words of the Bible,—away from a catechetical strictness of thinking *about* God and Christ, and towards a holy living *in* God and Christ,—away from a mechanical theory of Atonement by substitution or ransom, and towards a spiritual salvation from sin through the Spirit of God as manifested in Jesus Christ,—away from a semi-idolatrous devotion to rites and towards a more spiritual phase of Christianity ; and all

these changes are clearly in the direction of the Cardinal Doctrines of the Quakers. These doctrines have always existed in the Historic Church, but have of late years received a remarkable development in its Sermons and books. In a charming book by A. J. C. Hare, "Memorials of a Quiet Life," are the following passages, taken from Maria Hare's Note Book, which would be typical Quakerism from a Quaker pen.

"All the rubbish of earthly mindedness seemed swept away, and I lay, as it were, quite passive for the acting of God's Spirit. Thoughts of God were the first to spring up in the morning ; my heart waited not for my head to teach it how to pray, but was lifted up unconsciously and without effort in words of prayer and praise." And again she speaks of "The operation of His Spirit, sometimes felt almost sensibly in an indescribable communion with Him ;" or further ; "In prayer I felt most strongly that God was *in* ME, that I no longer had to search for Him out of self, His temple was

my soul." Yet Mrs. Hare was a devout member of the Church of England, and extracts of similar import might be made from writers of other denominations. They are quoted to show that Quakers are not the only ones holding these peculiar tenets.

Sunday after Sunday all the great truths of Quakerism are proclaimed from pulpits all over the land, and if the Friends grieve at the decay of their Organization, they can also rejoice that its truths are slowly but surely leavening the great mass of Christendom. Let me be clearly understood here, —I do not say the Quakers have brought all this about of themselves, but that they have all along had hold of many of the truths and of the Spirit that are working the mighty change, and so were clearly in the line of true historic religious development.

If Quakerism, in its denominational form, is to pass away, it will be because its mission is done, its truths awarded their true place in the Christian Life and the best of

its Spirit infused into the Historic Church, and so its "Raison d'être" has ceased to exist. But it may be that in the counsels of that inscrutable wisdom to which it has ever looked for light and strength, it is destined to be revived and transformed to suit the Spirit of the times that are before us, and still to bear its simple yet comforting testimony to a doubting world. But all evidence now points to its probable extinction. Whatever may be its fate, we may rest assured its members are neither Infidels, Atheists nor Pantheists, but devout, believing Christians,—that their faith has been life's best consolation to many a weary soul,—and has given it rest and peace in Christ and his love,—and that in private or in public, they have ever borne and will ever bear, faithful witness to the Grace, Majesty and forgiving Mercy of that God, "Who is the Author of Peace and the Lover of Concord,—in the knowledge of whom standeth our Eternal life, and whose service is perfect freedom" of body and of Soul.



CHAPTER XI.

Where Shall They Go?

Having transferred my own allegiance, through a period of hesitation and investigation, from the Quaker Society to the Protestant Episcopal Church, I have been surprised and gratified to find how many of the Descendants of the Quakers have found their spiritual homes in that communion. A little consideration will show us that this is, after all, the natural course of things. For the more thoughtful among them must discover that the Quakers have reduced their absence of form itself to a perfect form and so are become extreme formalists. Their opposition to a ceremonial worship, intended to emphasize their repugnance to the exaltation of ritual, dogma and sacerdotal rule over the spirit of devotion and

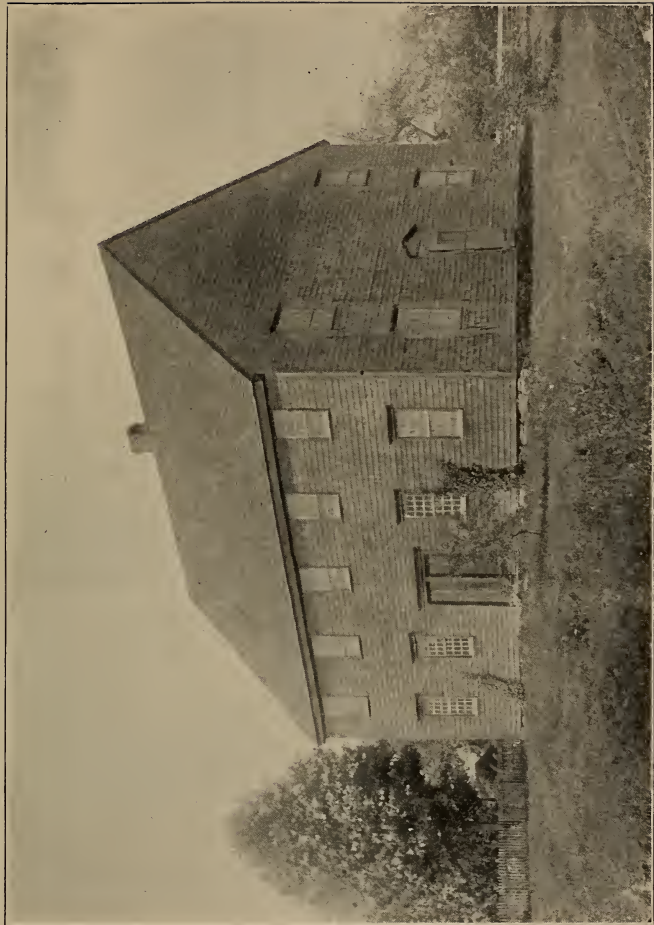
continual service of God, has degenerated into a fixed ceremonial. A Quaker service is as thoroughly determined beforehand, as to its form, as an Episcopal service. Any persistent violation of that form would be as promptly censured and punished among Quakers as among Episcopalians. The silence of a Quaker meeting is just as much expressive of the inward worship of their hearts, as the uttered prayer and praise of the Church, and no more so. The Friends very properly insist upon compliance with their order, and punish recalcitrant members by disowning them. Public worship is impossible without some form, and without public worship all religious organization is impossible. But it is a permanent danger of all religious service, that the ceremony becomes evacuated of its spirit, and is prized for its own sake, rather than for the religious life it fosters. The Quakers are a living proof of this tendency. In their honest efforts to do away with all institutional religion, they have instituted a monotonous

formalism, devoid of the variety and rich spiritual symbolism of the services of the Church. And so we find the extremists among them just as thorough formalists in their services, their dress and their speech, as the Ritualists in the Episcopal Church. The extreme conservative among *them* attaches as much importance to the proper period of silence, to the use of certain phrases and forms of sermonizing, to the plain coat, to the "Thee" and "Thou," and the "First-Day" of their speech, as the Ritualistic Rector attaches to his processionals and recessionals, his copes and albs and chasubles and all the other ritualistic paraphernalia. In either case, when the ceremonial is invested with its living spiritual significance, whether it be silence or ritual it may be grand and impressive. But when the spirit has departed from either, it becomes a barren form. There is just as little meaning to an earnest soul in the superfluous whining of the ultra Quaker formalist over the degeneracy of the age, over its

pianos and violins in homes, its fine dresses and amusements, as there is in the clerical cry for the church, with all her progressive instincts and necessities, to return again to the "Dogmatic, Sacramental, Sacerdotal and Ritualistic religion of three hundred years ago." Both forget that the world moves,—and each would stop the "Riot of private opinion" with his peculiar whim. But the Church moves on,—and will ultimately relegate both to the realm of effete causes. There is just as little spiritual food in the one as in the other for a soul hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of God. The younger minds of the Hicksite Quakers are alive to these facts,—they are, by virtue of their inherited instincts and training a religious class in the best sense of the term,—and while they turn with longing hearts from both Quaker fossilism and Episcopal Mediævalism, they can accept the Liturgy of the Living, Aggressive and Progressive Church, not as a formula of Divine origin, nor as the sole avenue of God's re-

deeming grace, but as an order of service at once convenient, beautiful, appropriate, expressive and necessary,—the fruit of many centuries of Christian culture and worship, and with such modifications as it is likely to receive from time to time at the hands of the Church, admirably adapted to the wants of the age, both for public worship and private devotion. This objection to the Liturgical Service once overcome, all other Quaker ideas harmonize more nearly with the Episcopal Church than with any other Denomination.

Their central doctrine of God's immanence, and of his immediate communion with the Spirit of Man, I have heard Sunday after Sunday from the lips of a devout and scholarly Doctor of Divinity in an Episcopal pulpit, and I find it affirmed also in the works and sermons of the clergy. The learned Maurice, of England, says:—"Continued intercourse with the Father of Light . . . is the only safeguard." And again, "I feel that there is another



FRIENDS' OBLONG MEETING HOUSE,
PAWLING, N. Y.

spirit dwelling with my Spirit, and willing to guide it into all good." And his Biographer says of him : " A certain inward voice, a certain Inward Light, was however acquiring an authority with him superior to the indications of circumstance." And the Rev. F. W. Robertson says :—" God's spirit in the soul, an inward power of doing the thing we will and ought,—that is strength, and nothing else." And again, " The thought of your mind is perchance the thought of God." And, " It is given us to distinguish between the voice which is from above, and that which speaks from below," and all through that wonderful sermon on " The loneliness of Christ," he makes even better statement of the doctrine than the Quakers themselves.

Of course it is not pretended that *all* in the Church hold this idea, for it is fortunate that there is here no authority to compel all thought and expression to assume one mould, and the Church is comprehensive enough to embrace the Spirit of a Maurice

or a Hare, and the ultramontane tendencies of the Theologian whose gaze is averted from the present to his millennial past.

So, too, the Quaker idea of common worship by participation in one common feeling and aspiration.

“Baptising in one tender thought the whole,” is realized in the use of the Collects of the Book of Common Prayer, by which all are brought to join in one worship. But especially in its freedom from the gloomy tenets of Calvinism is the Church attractive to a mind trained in the Quaker School. Its theology is least infected with the doctrines of Election, Fore-ordination, Predestination, or the more terrible one of Eternal Damnation. Bibliolatry, too, has no supreme rule in this denomination, and liberty of opinion is as absolute in its Communion as is possible within the limits of devotion to God and Christ. It makes no requirements for admission beyond the Apostles’ Creed, and imposes no special, particularized interpretation of its phraseology. It

requires no experience of any miraculous conversion, and leaves the individual conscience as unfettered as Quakerism can. Not only is one's own liberty of thinking and acting as free as it could be anywhere, but the Church would not presume to interfere in matters of amusement, of forms of marriage ceremony, and of supervision over members such as Quakerism has assumed. The minuteness of that supervision has materially weakened the Society of Friends,—the Church has no desire to undertake it. She assumes no authority over the conscience of men,—she is content to leave them in the freedom wherewith Christ has made them free.

These facts are becoming more and more apparent to the growing younger minds among the Quakers, and are operating powerfully, not only with them, but often with old and firm adherents of the Society. My Father was a regular and devoted attendant at meetings as long as he had strength to go, but he said, "If I should ever leave the

Friends, it would be for the Episcopal Church." He saw its wise liberty and approved it. He often approved of Episcopal freedom from "Rant about religion," and from what he, in his homely phrase, denominated "Hell-fire preaching." His chief objection, after that of a "Hireling Ministry," was to subscribing the formulated doctrine of the Trinity, which he did not then know was no part of the Confession of Faith required, beyond what stands in the Apostles' Creed. I once heard him say to an Episcopal Clergyman, "If thee will say, as the Scripture says, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and not add another word of thy own, I will be in perfect unity with thee." So when his Son, after years of careful thought, gave in his allegiance from conviction to the Historic Church, and passed into its fold, he interposed no word of censure, nor betrayed the least disappointment or regret. He foresaw and admitted the decay of his own Society, and in no way expected it to be the

Church of the future. He believed the Quakers were more nearly in unity with the Episcopalians than with any others, and more than once gave expression to his convictions. And while no step of my life has been more fruitful of good results to myself, mentally and spiritually, my satisfaction with it is exalted and intensified by the knowledge of its approval by his pure and upright spirit. The Quaker Society has already furnished, through its descendants, three Bishops for the Church,—Alonzo Potter, Horatio Pottér and Henry Potter ; devout men, wise administrators, and an honor to the Priestly Office. And apropos of this fact, I may tell the answer of the Quaker Lady, a few months since, who, when rallied by me on the propriety of uniting with the church and leaving her own society, aptly replied:—" Oh no, there is great need of Quakers yet, to furnish the best materials out of which to make Episcopal Bishops." And as I lay down my pen and commit this little work to its fate, I

trust it will not be amiss in me to say to those Quakers who find their religious associations broken up in the decay of their Society, and are waiting some opening to transfer their allegiance to a living Church, that they need make no unwilling surrender of their liberty of thought, investigation and individual opinion to enter the Communion of the Episcopal Church; that the Church fears no honest thinking, no sincere search after truth; that her Clergy are no Priestly tyrants, but willing leaders in the great fields of science and of general thought; that her devotional heritage will enrich their lives beyond all measure; that her great minds will unfold to them treasures of thought and lines of investigation to charm and delight them; while all her ordinances, administered in Christian love and freedom, will call all truth "To their pure minds by way of remembrance," and help to unite them more intimately with that Spirit they have already learned to adore, with the Christ in whom that Spirit dwelt in its fullness, and in whom is peace evermore.



CHAPTER XII.

Conclusion.

The previous chapters were written some years ago. Since then a new movement has begun within the society of Hicksite Friends. An effort is in progress to put it more fully in line with the requirements of modern thought and action. Its members are convinced of the necessity of immediate, systematic and harmonious work to prolong its life and increase its usefulness. It is a hopeful sign that they recognize and admit its weakness, are convinced of the main causes leading to its deterioration, and are ready to apply the necessary remedies. These causes lie chiefly in directions previously indicated in this book ; in the decrease and intellectual poverty of its ministry,—in the loss of its young members,—in its useless exclusiveness and hostility to music and

artistic decoration,—in its isolation from other Christian Bodies,—in its failure to keep up a rational interest in Holy Scripture, and in the critical study of its books,—and especially in the loss of its missionary spirit to bear the preached word to the thirsting multitudes by the wayside. But a new spirit, it is claimed, has been infused into its ranks, a Neo-Quakerism is in process of development, whose bow of promise is already in the sky. To this Regeneration of Quakerism we must give conscientious audience, in our final chapter. At Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, which is recognized as the official educational institution of the Society, large and important general Conferences have been held for the purpose of considering the present and future welfare of the organization, to revive its failing spirit, to kindle fresh enthusiasm, open new avenues of social and philanthropic effort, and most important of all, to gather into the fold again and retain in the work of the society, the young people in its

birthright membership. They realize that these have been alienated by too much stringency in matters of dress, of speech, of music, of amusements, of marriage, and by a too rigid adherence to its inflexible forms of worship and of service. They are convinced that the root ideas of Quakerism can be maintained in their purity, and all this minute supervision of members be abandoned for greater freedom in non-essentials. It is a hopeful spirit. They maintain the foundations of old Quakerism with fervid zeal, and assert the conscious communion of the human soul with the living God as the mainstay of their faith, as the essential sine qua non of their worship, just as they have always done, only enforcing it now in the name of modern research and modern progress, and supplementing it by all reasonable instrumentalities for its continuous missionary propagation, thereby assimilating themselves more nearly with the historic body of the Church.

In that great gathering of three thousand

people, the Friends not only heard their primary religious concepts propounded and explained, but they heard the more startling assertion that the Higher Criticism of the Bible and the ripest conclusions of Science all tend to establish the validity of those concepts, and to furnish them with their logical "raison d'être," apart from their own inward evidence. In this they are no doubt right, and in strict harmony with the trend of liberal thought. And upon such a basis they urge the more extended and critical study of the Sacred Scriptures, and especially of the life of the blessed Jesus, for clear and conclusive proofs that Christianity, as exemplified and taught by Him, is founded upon this essential faith in God's immediate inspiring Presence, and upon no other basis. Thus, in his new departure, the modern Friend would avail himself of the researches and investigations of the learned in other denominations to put himself "en rapport" with the tendencies of the age, and as an intellectual vindi-

cation of the main tenet of his faith. But unlettered ignorance will not be available to proclaim this modern phase of Quakerism, and out from this representative body of Friends comes the call for a better ministry, the ministry of more thoroughly educated people. Not for men and women educated for the special work of the ministry, and set apart as a privileged priestly class, but for men and women so educated and trained as speakers, that should they feel called to preach the word, they may do it with acceptance to cultivated listeners. Dr. Edward O. Janney says on this point ; “ We do not, indeed, educate for the ministry, but . . . we ought to educate our young people so that, if they become ministers later in life, they will be qualified for it.” (Swarthmore Conferences, 1896, Second Session, p. 65.)

In the same Conference Anna M. Jackson says ; “ When we have young, earnest, educated, consecrated teachers of Quakerism, they will prove to the thinking masses that

the development of man, physically, mentally, and morally, has regularly grown from the beginning, guided by inexorable Law, the product of Love,—not only the ‘greatest thing in the world,’ but the most rational thing in the world.” (Ibid. p. 59.) Many others uttered similar opinions, and no dissent was expressed by the conference, which seemed thus to be in unity with them. Verily, the fetters of conservatism are falling away, and *these* Quakers are putting themselves into a position where intellectual culture is not worthless for the ministry of Christ, nor the wisdom of this world folly to the most consecrated spirits. It is a great step in advance.

But with this change the militant spirit of old-time Quakerism is reviving. It is no longer enough to preach the Gospel at home, it must be carried to those who have it not,—and an organized propaganda of their faith must be instituted, to shed light in dark places. Dr. Jesse W. Holmes very tersely touches a weak spot when he says ;

“ Instead of preaching the Gospel to every creature, we have settled down to preaching it to each other.” (Ibid. 50.) Now it must be carried to the masses, who are hungering for it. “ The masses,” says Anna M. Jackson, “ are outside of the churches searching for something they do not find there.” (Ibid. 58.) This something Quakerism is to supply, and hence comes their clarion call for missionaries, to bear abroad the Good Tidings, not of any elaborate “ Plan of Salvation ” nor “ Scheme of Redemption,” but of the Eternal Presence of God and his Christ in the soul, capable of saving to the uttermost any of the children of men. “ The World is ripe for Quakerism, and the masses need it, but we touch them at too few points,” says the same speaker (p. 59). To touch them at more points, new instrumentalities must be called into action. The First Day School is adopted, although once frowned down as possessing some priestly element. Even music is introduced, though some protests are raised against this

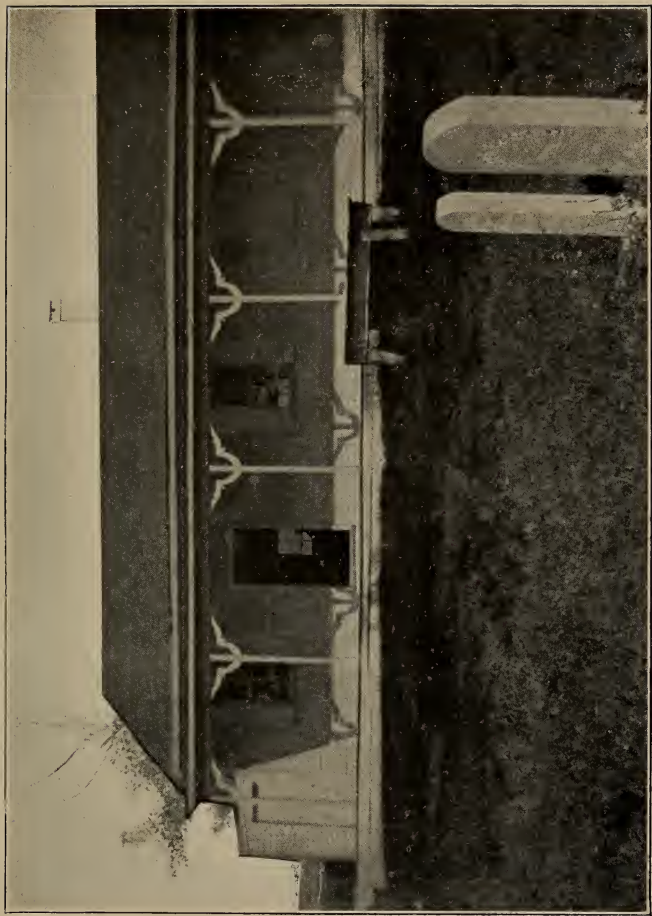
as not friendlike. The greatest freedom of organization and management is allowed, to enable them to adapt themselves to different environments. Some advised affiliation with Young Men's Christian Associations for practical work (though not without dissent,) and even Orders of Deaconesses were favorably mentioned. The forming of Adult Classes among laborers not in any church connection was strongly urged, and the necessity of thoroughly equipped teachers was made apparent. So would they make the practical nature of their religion felt among the impoverished and neglected ones of Earth. And in all this active work of the body militant, they do not seek to proselyte from other churches, but to reach those who have no religious connection, and are still in ignorance of the Voice of God pleading within them.

Thus the Neo-Quakers are putting on the armor once more to fight anew the old battle against indifference and vice and sin, armed with new weapons forged in the

modern workshop, and burnished and edged with worldly culture, as well as with the baptism of the Spirit. They are called upon to discard the outgrown and useless conservatisms that have hindered their progress and their best talent,—to no longer wear the trammels of peculiar dress and speech, and to become, like St. Paul, “all things to all men,” that some may be saved. And with all this they are urged to seek grounds of agreement rather than of difference with other denominations, to visit their churches, and so establish an affiliation with the great body of militant Christianity, from which they have hitherto stood aloof. Exclusiveness shall cease, and brotherhood prevail. It is a magnificent vision of growth, and has in it elements of coherence, which the Progressive Friends, once so strong and promising in Pennsylvania, lacked utterly. Bare progress is too vague and indefinite a tie to furnish a working motive,—it must have a definite direction, a luminous something to be won,—a note of

no uncertain sound by which it can be distinguished, and which will be its guide in storm and sunshine.

What, then, is to be the key-note of this new movement? What the one unmistakably celestial tone, sounding on unbrokenly through all the multiform discords that must result from the clashing of diverse natures and opinions? There must be a central enthusiasm to draw and to hold them. For the select few, as we have pointed out in an earlier chapter, the conscious communion of the All-Father in seasons of great spiritual exaltation will be the inspiration for the work. But this is too high a tension for the multitude who must be won in the new crusade. They have little time and less inclination for the introspective personal communion with the unseen Spirit of Life. Only by long effort can they rise to such heights of Spiritual attainment. There is need of a personal attachment, a personal affection, a personal inspiration,—the tangible leadership of the Divine. And



“OSWEGO MEETING HOUSE,”
DUTCHESS COUNTY, N. Y.

where in all history, in all life, in all creation, can that be found in greater fulness than in the one personality in which the perfect graces of humanity inhere, purified, exalted, and touched by the life of God,—in the One Person of history, in Jesus of Nazareth, which is the Christ ? So the Neo-Quakerism reverts again to the Holy Jesus and His stainless life for the fountains whence the thirsting novices shall be called to drink. Not that there are no other divine souls in the spiritual Hierarchy, but in Him is the revelation of the Father most complete, and through him is the Divine Love most clearly manifested. All shall be called to quench their thirst for the Divine at this ever open source without excluding other incarnations the world may have known. But there is no sense of expiation, of mediation in their call. “We do not employ any man to be mediator between us and God,” said Edgar M. Zavitz in the Conference (p. 24). None the less are they loyal to the

Christ of history and of Revelation. The same speaker continues ; " No other church in Christendom owns him as its head to the extent that Friends do. All others look to man to conduct the services, —we alone and entirely to Christ " (p. 24). It is to the living and reigning Christ in their hearts they turn, just as the Quakers have always done, not as one bearing *their* punishment that they may escape it, but as showing them the stainless life, the faith in the Father and communion with him, and the sacred Brotherhood of Man. In this simple faith of their Fathers, the Christianity, as *they* think, of revelation, they would go forth to bear their glad evangel to the fainting multitudes by the way.

But this Glad Evangel implies Evangelists, and evangelists are mortals who must live by their labor. How then shall the ministry of the Church be maintained ? Here lies the crucial test in the rejuvenation of historic Quakerism. How can their ministry be sustained, without yielding one of

their cardinal testimonies, that *against* a "hireling ministry?" Is a paid ministry necessarily mercenary? It involves a re-opening of the whole question, and a careful consideration as to whether the offensive use of that word "hireling" has not been utterly overdone. Why should it be invidiously applied to those who use their gifts in a spiritual way, any more than to those who labor in the intellectual field? This distinction is not only *not* a vital point in the doctrine of Friends, but appears to be in direct opposition to all just inferences from that doctrine. No hard and fast line can be drawn where pay cannot be given and accepted for real services rendered.

No doubt it once was a vital issue when Quakerism was largely a protest against priestly domination. But now, we have no state church, and when, in the light of evolution, it is equally a tenet that all the graces of mind and spirit are the free gifts of God in his magnificent unfoldings, why should this one be singled out as to be nec-

essarily given for the benefit of humanity free, while others are liberally rewarded? If the pious Quaker who labors in the vineyard of the Lord as a Doctor of Medicine can rightfully demand remuneration for his labors, why should not the one who is called to work in the spiritual vineyard be equally entitled to remuneration for his toil? The graces and intellectual powers of the latter are no more the free endowment of the Father, than the skill and knowledge of the former. Thus the broader view of our human attainments and endowments can abolish the difficulty that seems to furnish an insuperable obstacle to the prospective development of the church. Not by any less fidelity in the use of God's gifts to men shall this be accomplished, but by a more comprehensive view of the entire contents of his gifts,—the full scope of which is discernible only under the illumination of the idea of evolution as a divine process. The intellectual powers, the spiritual powers, the affectional, are all susceptible of improvement by careful at-

tention and nurture, and there can be no reason why the results of the one side of human nature should be liberally rewarded in this world's coin, and the other side be denounced as "hireling" or mercenary when it asks its adequate compensation. By the logical and consistent extension of its own fundamental doctrines can Neo-Quakerism be saved from the impotent conclusion that would deprive it of an active and a helpful ministry of the Living Word. The right of the ministry to its pecuniary reward is just as legitimate an outcome of Friends' doctrine as the right of any laborer to his hire in the toil of the farm or the factory. There will be conservatives who will protest against this, but their antagonism must be overcome for the living body must avail itself of the means necessary for the propagation of its faith. The Church that ceases to be a missionary body in the true sense, thereby dooms itself to stagnation and decay. The genuinely missionary spirit of these conferences is the best herald of a bet-

ter day for Quakerism, and its propagation depends largely upon a cultivated and consecrated ministry. But another evidence of the growth in grace among them is the presence of the Orthodox Quakers side by side with the Hicksites in this conference, though not officially representing their own Society. No one, in reading their discourses, could distinguish the one from the other by the tenor of their speeches.

I have thus tried to represent, briefly but fairly, the revival that is going on in some sections of the country among the Hicksite Friends. Of the entire sincerity and earnestness of the movement there can be no shadow of doubt. The leaders are noble spirits, and speak confidently of success in their undertaking. The opening Address of the Chairman of the Conference, Aaron M. Powell, was overflowing with faith in the inherent vitality of the Society, and in its adequacy for still disseminating true spiritual religion. Many others shared that confidence, and spoke hopefully of its future

advances. Joseph Wharton, following the parallel of Lincoln's famous speech, says that the mission of Quakerism "Is to take care that religion *of* the people, *for* the people, and *by* the people, shall not perish," nor be relegated in its ministry to a priestly hierarchy. The movement has by no means spread to all sections of the church, though committees are travelling widely bearing witness to the new, serene light that once more kindles on the horizon of the old organization. It is towards this light that the young and hopeful are slowly turning their expectant faces.

Shall their longing be in vain? For still the question remains; Is this revival to be a permanent one? Or is it all but the final struggle that betokens death and foretells dissolution? Let us venture no prophecy. Great hearts, strong minds, pure souls, and earnest wills are devotedly taking up the work, and manifold blessings will assuredly attend its prosecution. Should this Society regain its prestige, and reach

out its wisely helping hand of simple faith to the multitude through a vigorous propaganda, there can be no doubt that it will be a means of grace to thousands of hungry, waiting souls, who are neither scoffers, infidels nor atheists, but who cannot accept the creeds of the Churches in sincerity. Many communities would find its simple forms better suited to their wants and their resources, than the more elaborate, more beautiful and more costly forms of other denominations. Yet as they adopt new instrumentalities they will gradually approach the other churches and do work similar to theirs. Still there is work enough to be done in redeeming humanity from vice and sin to employ every agency for good, and no body of Christ's followers has pre-empted any portion of the blessed work. The Neo-Quakerism will find the harvest ready and waiting for the reapers. Will it rise in God's conquering might, to do its work ? Time alone can tell. Should it hear the Voice, heed its monitions, gird on its

spiritual armor and go forth in its power, no one will rejoice more sincerely than he who has labored so earnestly to state its character and its faith in this little book,—a labor of the heart,—a work of love and tender reminiscences. For to him as to them the Inner Light of Consciousness is the test of truth,—the Immediate Communion of the human soul with its Divine Creator and Savior is the one fundamental fact of religion, of worship, and of life itself. Upon that foundation, whatever is built in love and prayer, must prevail for blessed ends. Whether such ends involve the rejuvenation and perpetuity of the Society of Hicksite Friends, its baptism for a new work, its rehabilitation in the plenitude of power, and still retaining its cardinal tenets, or its gradual but inevitable mergence into some more pliant and more comprehensive organization which shall inherit its leavening principles and more effectually do its work, must remain, for the present, among the mysteries of Inscrutable Wisdom. The

light of an apparent dawn is along the horizon,—let us prayerfully watch if perchance it be the herald of the coming day, the precursor of the glory of the ever-living Son of God.

“ Hail, Gracious Light, the Spirit’s day ;
Pure effluence of celestial ray ;
First offspring of creative morn,
At God’s omniscient fiat born.”





[The following poem, by the Author of this book, is indicative of the Quaker belief in the "Voice Within," or the "Inner Light," and is appended to this chapter without further comment.]

THE VOICE.

"And I heard a Voice from heaven."

Canst thou not hear, Oh doubting Soul,
As fierce, wild billows o'er thee roll
 From life's rough sea,
The Voice that pleads within thy heart,
And fain would peace and love impart,
 God's peace for thee?

A still, small Voice, whose accents clear
Only the listening soul can hear,
 In reverence bent ;
A spirit Voice, that hath no sound,
Yet moves the human heart profound,
 With love intent.

It comes not in the tempest's roar,
That sweeps with desolation o'er
 Thy troubled path ;
But softer Voice than mother mild
E'er whispered to her darling child,
 Our Father hath.

When hushed in holiest reverence, thou
Dost low in adoration bow,
 And wait His time ;
Then in thy silence shall His word
Sweep o'er the heart's responsive chord,
 In strains sublime.

And thou shalt know the Voice that gives
Peace to the soul of him that lives
 By its behest ;
Thou knowest not whence it came, nor where
It vanished on the throbbing air,
 But *thou* art blest.

A peace serene shall dwell with thee,
And often, as on bended knee
 Thou prayest alone,
The Spirit of the living God
Shall make thy heart His own abode,
 His glorious throne.

And thou, with heavenly Presence blest,
Upon the Eternal Heart shall rest,
 And rest for aye ;
That peace shall be thy spirit's dower,
Thy life's consummate, holy flower,
 Its radiant day.

From this communion shalt thou rise
To cleave the splendor of the skies,
 And there behold
The Beatific Vision, won
By spirits that have freely gone
 Where God's Voice called.



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